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COXE, William



Robert Dendy,













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TRAVELS  
IN  
SWITZERLAND,  
AND IN THE  
COUNTRY OF THE GRISONS:

IN A  
SERIES OF LETTERS  
TO  
*WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq.*  
FROM  
WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.  
RECTOR OF BEMERTON.

---

WITH AN HISTORICAL SKETCH AND NOTES ON THE LATE  
REVOLUTION.

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THE FOURTH EDITION.  
IN THREE VOLUMES.  
VOL. I.

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LONDON:  
Printed by A. Strahan, Printers-Street,  
FOR T. CADELL JUN. AND W. DAVIES, IN THE STRAND.  
1801.



Là habite un Peuple simple, bienfaisant, brave, ennemi  
du faste, ami du travail, ne cherchant point d'esclaves,  
et ne voulant point de maîtres.

DE MEHEGAN,  
Tableau de l'Histoire Moderne.



TO THE  
C O U N T E S S  
OF  
PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY.

MADAM,

**T**HESE Letters, relating to Switzerland, naturally claim your Ladyship's protection ; for they were originally written while I had the honour of accompanying Lord Herbert upon his travels. I feel myself highly flattered, therefore, in having the permission of inscribing them to your Ladyship, and of thus



publicly acknowledging that I am, with great respect, and gratitude for obligations received from the Earl of Pembroke and your Ladyship,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's

most obedient and

obliged humble servant,

W<sup>M</sup> COXE.

VIENNA,  
JUNE 26, 1778.



# P R E F A C E

TO THE

EDITION OF 1789.

TEN years have elapsed since I gave to the Public a volume of Letters, under the title of “*Sketches on the Natural, Civil, and Political State of Switzerland.*” The favourable reception of that work induced me, in 1779, to make a journey through the country of the Grisons, a part of Switzerland hitherto little known. Having, in 1785 and 1787, opportunities of revisiting the same spots which I had before described, I was anxious to revise and augment my former publication. With this view I compared my descriptions at the very places which I attempted to delineate; attentively perused the criticisms of succeeding travellers; and in many of the principal towns, I entreated several persons, of political or literary  
A 3 eminence,



eminence, to correct any errors, or to suggest any improvement, with respect to those particular parts, with which, from situation, they were most conversant.

The materials collected from these and other sources, increased by my own observations and researches, encourage me to hope, that the present improved account of so interesting a country as Switzerland, will not be unacceptable to the public, and may be considered as a new work.

BEMERTON,  
FEB. 20, 1789.



## ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

### FOURTH EDITION.

THE overthrow of the Helvetic Confederacy, since the publication of the last edition in 1791, having totally changed the political state of Switzerland, I have deemed it necessary to give an introductory sketch, and historical notes, relative to the late revolution, with an index map of the new divisions, as settled in 1798. I have, however, made no alteration in the original work, but left it as a memorial of Switzerland in a state of independence, freedom, and prosperity.

In the present, as well as the former editions, I beg leave to renew my warmest acknowledgments to Lieutenant-General Floyd, for the use of his accurate journal, kept during our joint tour in 1776. I was likewise indebted, for various communica-

VOL. I.                      \*A 4                      tions,



tions, to the late much-lamented Thomas Pennant, Esquire, and to his son David Pennant, Esquire, for Letter 91, on the Italian bailliages. My thanks were no less due for the kind assistance of my late intelligent and esteemed friend Dr. Pulteney, of the Rev. Thomas Martyn, professor of botany in the University of Cambridge, and the Rev. Richard Relhan.

But I cannot put forth this new edition without gratefully recollecting the judicious animadversions of the elegant writer to whom these Letters are addressed, and testifying my regret for the loss of an affectionate and friendly instructor, who kindly directed my literary pursuits, and to whose precepts I owe more than I am able to express.

BEMERTON,  
Nov. 1, 1801.

# CONTENTS

## OF THE

## FIRST VOLUME.

### HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE LATE REVOLUTION.

Chap. I.	-	-	-	-	Page v
Chap. II.	-	-	-	-	xxv
Chap. III.	-	-	-	-	xliv

### LET.

1. ROUTE through the Black Forest—Source of the Danube	-	-	-	-	Page 1
2. Arrival in Switzerland—Schaffhausen—Fall of the Rhine	-	-	-	-	4
3. Isle of Reichenau—Constance—Genevan Establishment—Isle of Meinau—Lake of Constance					14
4. St. Gallen—Canton of Appenzel	-	-	-	-	24
5. Valley of the Rhine—The Lake and Town of Walenstadt	-	-	-	-	34
6. Canton of Glarus	-	-	-	-	41
7. Abbey of Einsiedlin—Rapperschwyl					52
8. Town and Canton of Zurich	-	-	-	-	59
9. Ecclesiastical Affairs—State of Literature—Learned Men — Society of Physics — Seminaries — Libraries	-	-	-	-	81
10. Expedition along the Borders of the Lake of Zurich—Rychterschwyl—Isle of Ufnau—Rapperschwyl—Grunengen—Ustar — Greiffensee — Excursion to Regensberg, and to the Summit of the Lagerberg	-	-	-	-	102



LET,

- |  |         |          |
|--|---------|----------|
| 11. Winterthur—Castle of Kyburgh   | -       | Page 121 |
| 12. Frauenfeld—Of the Helvetic Confederacy—Diets   |         | 127      |
| 13. Route by Water from Zurich to Baden—Bridge of<br>Wettingen—Baden—Castle of Hapsburgh   |         | 136      |
| 14. Konigsfelden—Windisch—Voyage down the Rhine  |         | 144      |
| 15. The Town of Basle—Erasmus—Library—Holbein  |         | 152      |
| 16. Government of Basle  | - - -   | 165      |
| 17. Combat at the Hospital of St. James, between the<br>Forces of Louis Dauphin of France, and a Corps<br>of Swiss Troops—Ruins of Augst—Mulhausen |         | 177      |
| 18. Bishopric of Basle—Porentru—Abbey of Bellelay—<br>Arlesheim—Delmont—Valley of Munster—Pierre<br>Pertuis—Valley of St. Imier                    | -       | 188      |
| 19. The Town of Bienne   | - - -   | 209      |
| 20. The Town and Canton of Soleure—Detail of the<br>Government—Ancient and New Burghers—<br>Assembly of the Rosengarten                            | - -     | 218      |
| 21. Treaties with France—Reflections on Foreign Ser-<br>vice   | - - - - | 244      |
| 22. The Canton of Zug  | - - -   | 254      |
| 23. The Town and Canton of Lucern—General Pfiffer's<br>Model   | - - -   | 259      |
| 24. Valley of Entlibuch—Zoffingen—Lake of Sempach<br>—Anniversary of the Battle  | -       | 277      |
| 25. The Lake of Lucern—Gerisau—Schweitz—Origin<br>of the Helvetic Confederacy—William Tell—<br>Altdorf   | - - - - | 285      |
| 26. Canton of Underwalden—Sarne—Saxelen—Tomb<br>and Character of Nicholas de Flue—Stantz—<br>Engelberg   |         |          |

# C O N T E N T S.

xi

LET.

Engelberg — Passage over the Suren Alps to Altdorf	Page 303
27. Valley of Schoellenen—Devil's Bridge—Valley of Urseren—Valley and Mountain of St. Gothard — Sources of the Tefino and Reufs	329
28. Passage and Glazier of the Furca—Source of the Rhone	344
29. Mount Grimfel—Source of the Aar—Of the Chamois	352
30. Valley of the Aar—Land of Hasli—Meyringen	367
31. Fall of the Reichenbach—Passage of the Sheidec—Valley and Glaciers of Grindelwald	376
32. Valley and Glaciers of Lauterbruennen — Fall of the Staubbach	385
33. Lakes of Thun and Brientz—Passage of Mount Gemmi—Baths of Leuk	392
34. Republic of the Vallais—Cardinal Schinner—Town of Sion—Martigny—St. Maurice	400
35. Of the Vallais—Goiters and Idiots	417
Extract from Saxo Grammaticus	434



## DIRECTIONS FOR THE PLATES.

### MAPS AND PLANS.

INDEX Map of Switzerland	-	to face Page i.
Large Map of Switzerland	-	1
Plan of the Bridge of Wettingen	-	137
Plan of the Lakes of Thun and Brientz	-	393

### VIEWS.

FALL of the Rhine	-	-	to face Page 11
Naefels	-	-	44
View in the Valley on Munster	-	-	202
Pierre Pertuis	-	-	204
Hermitage near Soleure	-	-	224
Lucern	-	-	259
Abbey of Engelberg	-	-	315
Sion	-	-	408





according to the  
*NEW DIVISIONS*

in 1798.



INTRODUCTORY SKETCH  
OF THE  
REVOLUTION IN SWITZERLAND.

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CHAP. I.

*Principal Causes of the Revolution in Switzerland*  
—Weakness and Discordance of the Helvetic  
States—Impolitic Exclusions from Offices of Trust  
and Commerce — Prevalence of Infidelity —  
Literary Societies—State of the neighbouring  
Powers—House of Austria—King of Sardinia  
Views and Intrigues of France—Plan for the  
Subjugation of Switzerland on the Conclusion of  
the Treaty of Campo Formio — The French  
Agents propose Reforms in the respective Govern-  
ments, and publish a Plan for a new Confede-  
racy—Alarm of the Helvetic Confederacy—Diet  
of Arau — France succeeds in disuniting the  
respective States.

WITH a heart full of sorrow and regret, I  
deliver to the public this new edition of a  
work, written when Switzerland was in a state  
of freedom.



I entered Switzerland without prepossession or prejudice, and after four successive tours at different periods of my life, in which I repeatedly traversed almost every part of the country, the result of my deliberate observations was a full conviction, that the governments, in general, were mild and equitable, and the great mass of people free and happy. A few instances of narrow policy, and some abuses in the administration of justice, particularly in the democratic states, did not escape my notice, and I censured them with freedom and impartiality. Still, however, a full conviction remained, that the good predominated over the evil; and the general welfare was visible in the population, husbandry, and industry of the natives: the country abounded with good inns and roads, contained many flourishing towns and villages, and exhibited every appearance of public prosperity and private happiness. This opinion was also the universal sentiment of all writers, until the commencement of the French revolution.

Since that period a new system of ideal perfection, in the theory of government, founded on general representation and universal suffrage, has been formed by speculative enthusiasts, and adopted by ambitious and designing men. With this visionary model all governments were compared,

compared, without reference to national character, or to local, moral, and political circumstances ; and the freest constitutions have been stigmatised as despotic.

Even Switzerland was involved in this general censure ; and writers, either misled by false principles, or suborned by France, have not been wanting to assert, that the natives were neither free nor happy, and that the people were eager to throw off the oppressive yoke of Helvetic oligarchy. These declamations were the harbingers of French aggression, and were intended to sanction perfidy, and vindicate unprovoked invasion. On the contrary, the whole history of this eventful revolution proves, that the people were fully satisfied with their condition, and decidedly averse to all innovations.

Should this position be admitted, a question naturally arises, How a warlike and free people, who could bring 100,000 men into the field, and whose country was defended by almost impregnable mountains, could be reduced, in the space of a few weeks, to unconditional submission ? To enter into a minute detail of this revolution would require a volume ; a brief account, therefore, of the principal causes and events which produced that fatal catastrophe



will be sufficient in a work relating to the former and not to the present state of Switzerland.

The first cause was that principle of weakness and indecision natural to a federal union, composed of numerous states, differing in extent, government, religion, and interests; jealous of each other, and therefore open to intrigue; easily divided, and with difficulty brought to act in one compact body, and on one uniform plan.

The second cause was the spirit of innovation and irreligion, disseminated according to a regular system, and by means of literary societies, instituted ostensibly for the purpose of promoting knowledge and toleration, but secretly directed by the Jacobin clubs in France. They found many partisans among the gentry in the French parts of Switzerland, already corrupted with the doctrines of Voltaire and Rousseau, and more particularly in the town and neighbourhood of Geneva, which had long been the scene of domestic commotions, and now became the focus of revolutionary principles.

The rapid progress of these doctrines was aided by the disaffection prevailing in some parts of the country, which may be considered as the third cause that contributed to the fall of Switzerland;

zerland ; it arose in some of the states from the nature of the governments, and in the subject countries from the tenure of the bailliages. In several states the offices of government were exclusively confined to a certain number of burghers, and even commerce was restricted in Basle and Zurich. The exclusion from the offices of government created disaffection only among the gentry and citizens ; but the restrictions on commerce excited general discontent among the peasants, particularly the borderers of the lake of Zurich, and in the canton of Basle, who became early and active partisans of the revolutionary principles.

The tenure of the bailliages afforded another source of discontent. These bailliages were either countries conquered and annexed to a particular canton or state, or subject to two or more states conjointly, and governed by bailifs appointed in rotation. The bailifs or governors nominated by the aristocratical states were seldom guilty of exaction, and, if guilty, were speedily brought to justice ; but those appointed by the democratical states were often guilty of oppressions, from the pernicious custom of putting the governments to sale, and from the difficulty of obtaining redress. Hence the natives of these subject countries were inclined to seek relief

a 3

from



from foreign interference, and eagerly adopted the new system of liberty and equality.

Such were the general causes derived from the internal situation of Switzerland; but its external relation to other powers had no less influence.

Switzerland, including the country of the Grisons, was surrounded by France, the German empire, the Austrian, Venetian, and Sardinian dominions: her security, therefore, depended on maintaining a due balance among these powers, and preventing all encroachments on the Helvetic territory.

The length and nature of the bloody contest which wrested the greater part of Switzerland from the house of Austria, excited a national antipathy, which two centuries of peace had not wholly obliterated, and which the unguarded expressions of Joseph the Second, during his travels through the country, and the equivocal conduct of the Austrian court, contributed to revive. In consequence of this jealousy, the Swiss, excepting the Grisons, seem to have avoided any close connection with the house of Austria; and notwithstanding the repeated aggressions of France in the early part of the revolution, withstood all the solicitations of the combined powers, and maintained an uniform  
neutrality,

neutrality, when their accession to the confederacy would have opened the defenceless frontiers of France to the inroads of the enemy. Hence, rather than accept the proffered assistance of Austria, they tamely suffered the French to appropriate the district of Porentru, which commanded the important passes on the north-west side of Switzerland.

A similar jealousy against the house of Savoy, the ancient sovereigns of the Pays de Vaud, operated in the councils of Bern, and induced them to acquiesce in the invasion of Savoy, which equally exposed their southern frontiers.

Since their first treaty with Louis the Eleventh, the Swiss had maintained an intimate connection with France, by a series of alliances ; in consequence of which considerable bodies of their troops \* were taken into French pay ; they were distinguished with commercial privileges ; and annual subsidies, under the name of *Les argens de paix et d'alliance*, were granted to all the states who chose to receive them †. The officers, in retiring from the French service, were gratified with pensions ; and numbers of the gentry placed their capitals in the French funds, and drew from thence the principal

\* Fourteen regiments at the time of the revolution.

† See Letter 21.



means of their subsistence. Hence French manners were gradually diffused; a closer bond of union was cemented between both nations, and numerous adherents of France resided in every part of the country.

During the monarchy France was conscious of the advantages which she derived from her alliance with the Helvetic republic, and, except in a few instances, uniformly conciliated the friendship of the Swiss. Soon after the deposition of the king, the French rulers tore asunder the bands of amity; yet the habits of intimacy were too closely interwoven to be suddenly separated, and advocates were not wanting to justify their proceedings, although the whole tenor of their conduct manifestly tended to foment tumult, and to disorganise the Helvetic body.

At an early period of the revolution the views of France were directed towards Switzerland, as well from its importance as a barrier on her eastern frontier, as from its central position between the German empire and Italy. The reduction, therefore, of Switzerland was a favourite object of the republican rulers, and was only suspended by the dread of adding Switzerland to the host of enemies, who menaced France on all sides. They accordingly temporised  
under

under the mask of friendship, and succeeded in preserving the neutrality of the Helvetic confederacy, by fomenting the national antipathy to the house of Austria. Yet even during this specious display of friendship, their agents industriously spread disaffection, and prepared the mine which was ready to explode on the first favourable opportunity.

Such an opportunity presented itself at the conclusion of the treaty of Campo Formio, which left the Swiss without an ally on the continent, and opened another passage into their territory by the establishment of the Cisalpine republic, and the dismemberment of the Valtelline, Chiavenna, and Bormio from the Grisons.

At this period the French republic had acquired a colossal strength, which awed the surrounding nations, and every power except England shrunk from the contest. The king of Sardinia, deprived of half his territory, was the vassal of France; the pope and the king of Naples owed the possession of a precarious sceptre to the forbearance of the Directory; Prussia pertinaciously maintained her close connection with the new republic; and Austria, vanquished by the genius of Bonaparte, had concluded a dishonourable peace.

But



But the French rulers were not content with planting the tri-coloured flag on the summit of Mont Blanc, on the left bank of the Rhine, and at the mouth of the Scheldt, and with establishing the limits of their empire by the natural boundaries of the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Mediterranean, and the ocean. With a view to secure their territories against the future aggressions of the continental powers, they purposed to form a series of dependent republics along the line of their frontiers, as a kind of outwork to remove the point of attack. At each extremity of this line they had already established the Cisalpine, Ligurian, and Batavian republics; a connecting link of this chain was Switzerland, which covered the most vulnerable parts of the French territory, and from its natural strength and central position formed the citadel of Europe.

Another motive for the subjection of Switzerland was derived from the disorganising principles of the French republic, and their incessant desire to assimilate all other forms of government to their own, and to found a new political balance on this basis. Against these principles was directed the coalition of the European states; but though all, except England, had been lured or compelled to conclude separate treaties

of peace or alliance; yet the dread of these revolutionary principles continued in full force, rendered the pacification with Austria of uncertain continuance, and a new coalition by no means improbable. Hence, for their own security, the French rulers deemed it necessary to establish a new scheme of alliance, for the purpose of maintaining the political balance between the representative and non-representative systems of government, by which latter name they designated all constitutions that did not assimilate with their own. From this cause arose the war of extermination against England, the foundation of the Batavian, Ligurian, and Cisalpine republics, and the plan for the revolution of Switzerland. For while the spirit of the Helvetic governments, however excellent in other respects, was hostile to all innovations, Switzerland might possess the true characteristics of a free state, yet could not be a cordial ally with the French republic. Hence it was easy to foresee, that when a line of demarcation was drawn between the two systems, Switzerland would be claimed by France.

Such were the real motives, acknowledged by the French themselves and their most zealous partisans, which induced France to revolutionise



revolutionise Switzerland; the list of grievances \* which they exhibited against the Helvetic government were merely advanced to justify aggression, and are aptly called by Carnot “*Pretextes pour réaliser à leur égard la fable du loup et de l’agneau †.*”

Aware that it would be difficult to manage a number of federal but independent governments, and a free people devoted to ancient principles, they determined to new-model and reduce the confederacy to a representative form similar to their own.

The Directory laid the plan of subjugation with great address, and unfortunately carried it into execution with little opposition. They purposed to divide the members of the Helvetic confederacy by fomenting commotions, and by occupying the attention of the respective states to prevent them from resisting in one compact and united body. They then determined to turn their whole force against the canton of Bern, on the conquest or submission of which the reduction of all Switzerland depended; thus verifying the plan of external

\* See the laboured invective of the Directory against the Swiss government, in the *Moniteur*.

† *Reponse de Carnot.*

policy which republican France, like Rome, has uniformly adopted, of conquering all nations by attacking *them singly* \*.

As early as 1796, they demanded from the Swiss states the dismissal of Mallet du Pan and the French emigrants. The compliance with this mandate, in opposition to the humane and spirited remonstrances of the British minister, Mr. Wickham, was the first fatal act of submission: it may be considered as a virtual renunciation of their independence, and announced the subsequent imbecility of their counsels.

Dreading the effect of these remonstrances, and eager to counteract the influence of England, they preceded their hostilities, in 1797, by requiring Bern, and the other Helvetic cantons, if necessary, to give directions for Mr. Wickham's immediate departure from Switzerland; his sole object being to "excite plots against the internal " and external security of the French republic." The British minister, who foresaw the acquiescence of the Bernese government, withdrew to Frankfort on a leave of absence, and voluntarily announced the termination of his embassy, in a dignified note addressed to the rulers of Bern. Thus the alliance of England, who alone with-

\* "*Dum singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur.*"



flood the encroaching spirit of France, and was inclined to render every assistance in her power, was withdrawn, and Switzerland left to her fate.

The Directory first recommended, as the price of their forbearance, or rather prescribed to each of the Swiss states, the abolition of their respective governments, and the establishment of a provisional regency, until a constitution should be formed on the basis of universal suffrage and general eligibility.

This plan was announced in a declamatory letter, full of revolutionary jargon\*, by Ochs, grand

\* After addressing the magistrates of Basle with the usual terms of "Magnificent and gracious Lords," he adds, "This is probably the last time that these antiquated titles shall strike the ears of your excellencies. I cannot dissemble the pleasure I have in renouncing them myself, and in cherishing the hope that the endearing title of Citizen is so soon to succeed them. I consider the Revolution of Switzerland as completed." Towards the conclusion of the letter he observes, "I tell you that the light of simple common sense, the force of circumstances, the regeneration of primitive ideas, the public and general good, an infinite number of political considerations, and particularly the light of eternal justice, impose upon you the duty of acquiescing, without delay, in the wishes  
" of

grand tribune and envoy from Basle. He urged the government of Basle to declare by a formal decree the emancipation of their subjects, the convocation of primary assemblies for the choice of representatives to arrange a new constitution, and the establishment of provisional committees.

It is needless to detail the intrigues by which France promoted this specious plan of reformation, and succeeded in exciting internal commotions. From the cantons of Zurich, Basle, and Schaffhausen, their partisans disseminated their doctrines by means of popular clubs, literary societies, and inflammatory hand-bills; and when attempts were made to check the spreading contagion, threats were denounced against the magistrates, and even formal protections issued by the French minister, declaring them personally responsible for the safety of those who manifested revolutionary principles.

When the danger of this disorganising system was increased by the approach of French armies on the side of Basle and Geneva; when the borderers of the lake of Zurich manifested their

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“ of your subjects, and in the councils of the magistrates  
“ and citizens, who have proved themselves their  
“ defenders.”

decided



decided attachment to the French ; when an insurrection was on the eve of bursting forth in the Pays de Vaud ; when a column of French threatened the town of Bienne, and when a corps of 2000 men from the Cisalpine republic attacked the canton of Uri, the spirit of Switzerland seemed to awaken from its lethargy, and to resume its ancient intrepidity.

The principal states of the league sent federal deputies to Bern to assist the republic with their counsels, and deliberate on the measures for defending their liberties. But a more decisive conduct was adopted, and on the 2d of January a general diet assembled at Arau. On the 25th all the states except Basle renewed the solemn oath of confederacy. The administration of the oath was preceded by a speech from Weifs, the venerable burgomaster of Zurich, and president of the diet, calculated to rekindle the declining flame of patriotism : “ The three heroes of  
“ Schweiz, Uri, and Unterwalden, confede-  
“ rated in the presence of God to obtain liberty  
“ for themselves and their countrymen ; they  
“ effected what they swore, and they, their  
“ brothers and their sons, beheld their struggles  
“ for freedom crowned with victory. We their  
“ descendants have experienced the happy effects  
of

“ of that confederation in an uninterrupted  
 “ enjoyment of peace and freedom, beyond all  
 “ other nations upon earth. The same blessings  
 “ will still continue to render our country  
 “ flourishing, provided the ties of brotherly  
 “ union be still preserved in their full force  
 “ among us.” After supplicating the Almighty  
 to bless this religious and patriotic act, each  
 deputy swore, in the name of his respective state,  
 “ to maintain the confederacy inviolate, and  
 “ to protect each other in their alliances and  
 “ constitutions.”

This solemn appeal to Heaven proved a mere ceremony; its effects were prevented by internal commotions, and by the revolutionary spirit which had gone forth throughout the nation. Even at the moment when the diet swore to maintain their union, the confederacy was virtually dissolved, and Switzerland devoted to subjection; Basle had already separated herself from the Helvetic states; Schaffhausen \* adopted a revo-

\* It is remarkable, that the effects of the French revolution spread earlier and quicker in the aristo-democratical cantons, than either in the aristocratical or democratical. Schaffhausen, next to Basle, seems to have announced the most effectual resolutions to form a change in the government. The narrative of this trans-



a revolutionary government; Zurich, and the other aristocratical cantons, were preparing to admit

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action, by Professor Meister, who wrote under the auspices of France, will serve to display the means used by the French to paralyse the government of Switzerland, by introducing a revolutionary system, at the moment when they were preparing to attack Bern, and overturn the Helvetic confederacy. “On the 2d of February deputies from Theyngen, Schleithem, Neunkirch, and Unterhallan, arrived at Schaffhausen, and presented to the Secret Council a memorial from twenty-two communities, requiring a new government conformable to the principles of liberty and equality. They were received in the most friendly manner, and admitted to the honours of a fitting. On the 3d their demand was taken into consideration, both by the great council and by each of the twelve tribes. The great council proposed an amendment of the ancient form of government; but the tribes were inclined to make any sacrifice for the good of their country. On the 4th, an extraordinary meeting of the Great Council was held, and a final attempt made to preserve the ancient constitution.”

Messrs. Spleitz and Schalch were deputed to Neunkirch, where delegates from all except seven tranquil communities formed a congress, and prevailed on the people to send, on the 8th, twelve delegates to Zurich, for the purpose of conferring with twelve counsellors on a new order of things. At the conclusion of this agreement, they amicably adjourned to dinner: but during the

admit the new constitution prescribed by France;  
the double contingent voted by the diet of Arau  
did

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the repast some of the delegates having privately quitted the company, two hundred of the populace rushed into the hall, loudly and tumultuously exclaiming, "Liberty and Equality!" The delegates from Neunkirch and Theyngen threw themselves between the populace and the deputies; immediately the congress was assembled, the two deputies were compelled to send by a messenger the act of union to Schaffhausen, and a guard was appointed to protect them until his return.

At noon the following day the messenger came back, and was accompanied by a numerous crowd to the congress. The two deputies read the convention, which was transmitted from Schaffhausen; instantly the kiss of fraternity was conveyed from lip to lip, and a cry of joy resounded on all sides. "Liberty and Equality!" were proclaimed from the windows to the multitude in the streets, and followed by repeated exclamations of "Long live Schaffhausen!" "Long live the deputies!" Tri-colour cockades were distributed, and a tree of liberty was planted in the court of the castle. Notwithstanding the proclamation of equality, the two deputies, the bailif, the clergyman, and curate, had the honour of first using the spade, the mattock, and the axe, on this occasion.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, the deputies accompanied by five dragoons, returned to Schaffhausen; on the 7th the primary voters were elected in the town, and the 8th in the country; and the Great and Little



did not amount to 6000 men; and Bern, on which the salvation of Switzerland depended, thus exposed to invasion, was timid and irresolute.

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councils were declared a provisional government. On the 9th the contingent was ordered to Bern, but with no more success than at Zurich: some troops prepared to march; but the electors were suspicious in the presence of soldiers; they found admittance into the great council, and were accompanied by many of the people to hear the original summons from Zurich and Soleure. The lecture, however, made so little impression, that many of the soldiers returned home, as it was said, to prevent the effusion of blood.

Part of the contingent seems to have arrived at Baden; but, on receiving the news of the capture of Bern, returned instantly to Schaffhausen; a deputation was sent by the new government to Mengaud, excusing themselves for this step; and their apology was well received.

## CHAP. II.

*France prepares to attack the Canton of Bern—Occupies the Erguel and of Bienne—Supports the Insurgents in the Pays de Vaud—Weak and fluctuating Councils of the Government of Bern—The Pays de Vaud declared an independent Republic, and occupied by the French Troops—Admission of fifty Delegates into the Great Council, and Plan for the Reformation of the Government—Negotiations and Armistice—Efforts of the Avoyer Steiguer and General d'Erlach—Preparations for Resistance—Full Powers granted to General d'Erlach—Recalled—Indignation excited by Brune's Ultimatum—Decree issued by the Government of Bern for the Establishment of a new Constitution—Rejected by Brune.*

THE French, having accomplished the first part of their plan, that of dividing the confederate states, proceeded to the attainment of their second object, the subjection of Bern. With this view they secured the passes which facilitated the invasion of her territory, by



seizing the Erguel and the town of Bienne, under the pretence of succeeding to the rights of the bishop of Basle, whose territory they had usurped.

The attempt to detach the Pays de Vaud from Bern, and erect it into a republic, under the auspices of France, was equally successful, from the pusillanimity and infatuation of the Bernese government. A few factious leaders, aided by the emissaries of France, having excited a spirit of insurrection in the Pays de Vaud, the disaffected revived an obsolete claim of an assembly of states convened under the dukes of Savoy, for the purposes, as it was said, of legislation and taxation. This right was asserted in an elaborate work, entitled, “*Essai sur la Constitution du Pays de Vaud*,” written by La Harpe\*, a native of Rolles, and chief of the insurgents, who was banished from his country for his revolutionary principles, and took refuge at Paris. He stated that Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, in the cession of the Pays de Vaud to the cantons of Bern and Friburgh, reserved to the inhabitants their privileges in the fullest extent, and that this treaty was guaranteed by Charles the Eleventh.

\* Preceptor to Alexander Paulovitch, the present emperor of Russia, and recently one of the Swiss Directory.

This publication furnished the Directory with a pretence for invading the Pays de Vaud. At their instigation petitions were presented to Bern and Friburgh, claiming the revival of these obsolete rights, and on their rejection appeals were made to France. Accordingly the Directory issued a notification, declaring it their duty, as representatives of Charles the Eleventh, and as successors of Emanuel Philibert, to support the claims of the petitioners. This notification was soon followed by a decree (December 28), declaring the members of the governments of Bern and Friburgh personally and individually responsible for the lives, liberty, and property of the natives of the Pays de Vaud, who had placed themselves under the safeguard of the republic. At the same time large bodies of troops, under the command of General Menard, advanced towards the confines of the canton, on the side of Geneva.

In this alarming crisis, the rulers of Bern amused themselves with refuting the claims of the petitioners; as if the controversy was to be decided by obsolete records, rather than by the sword; and, instead of sending an armed force to awe the insurgents, deputed commissioners to assemble the militia, and propose the oath of allegiance. Twenty-four battalions cheerfully

complied, but six refused; and as these recusants were neither disbanded or punished, this step only served to aggravate the audacity of the insurgents. The castle of Chillon was seized on the 10th of January, committees of safety were instituted, national guards enrolled, and a regular system of insurrection organised.

A momentary spirit at this period seems to have animated the counsels of Bern; but it was ill judged and ill directed, and produced a more fatal effect than total submission. Colonel Weifs was deputed with full powers to quell the insurrection, and proclaim martial law through the country; but his character was ill suited to this enterprise; and instead of being supported by a strong force from the German part of the canton, he began his progress with not more than 3000 effective men. Originally a warm advocate for the principles of the French Revolution, he had recently changed his opinion, and recognised the danger of French fraternity. But he still retained a fondness for conciliatory measures, and preferred negotiation to action. Instead of unsheathing the sword, he took up the pen, and wasted his time in composing and publishing his declamatory pamphlet, "*Reveillezz-vous Suisses.*" His feeble exertions were rendered still more ineffectual by the temporising conduct



conduct of the government of Bern, and the ill-timed remonstrances of the diet of Arau against the proclamation of martial law.

Hence the numerous friends of government were intimidated ; the insurgents expelled the bailifs, formed a provisional assembly at Lausanne, and, declaring themselves independent, requested the immediate assistance of the French commander. Eagerly availing himself of this appeal, Menard dispatched his adjutant with a summons to General Weifs, ordering him to evacuate the district, which had thus declared itself independent. The adjutant, accompanied by two French hussars and two native dragoons, passed through the village of Thierens, in the middle of the night, without a trumpet. Being challenged by the Swiss patrols, he made no reply, and an affray ensued, in which the Swiss sentinels were wounded, and one of the hussars killed. Notwithstanding the humiliating concessions of Bern, and the proofs that the Swiss patrols were not the aggressors, this transaction was made the pretext of hostilities ; the Pays de Vaud was inundated with troops, and declared an independent republic, under the protection of France.

During these transactions, the government of Bern exhibited a strange mixture of spirit and  
imbecility,

imbecility, timidity and rashness: levies of troops were one moment ordered, and the next countermanded; conciliatory measures were counteracted by threats, and preparations for resistance embarrassed by attempts at negotiation.

This fluctuation of counsels was derived from the disunion which prevailed among the members of the government, the influence of the French party, and, above all, from the representations of the government of Zurich. The magistrates of that canton, which was second in population and power in the Swiss confederacy, urged the necessity of recurring to negotiation, and, by their connection with the moderate party of Bern, baffled her counsels, and weakened her efforts. In vain the avoyer Steiguer, General d'Erlach, and a few exalted patriots, attempted to animate the government to a sense of danger, and convince them that their only security consisted in arms. Their remonstrances had no permanent effect; and if a temporary spirit was excited, it soon subsided, and was followed by humiliating concessions.

The party, which formed a large majority in the councils, vainly hoped to conciliate France by partially adopting the plans of reform suggested by the agents of the Directory. Even while

while they meditated resistance to the invasion of the Pays de Vaud, and sent a spirited remonstrance to the French republic; while they quelled a mutiny of the regiment stationed at Aarberg; while they instituted a committee of police, to check the progress of the revolutionary doctrines, and arrested several leaders of sedition, they weakened the ancient fabric of their venerable constitution: the sovereign council, in contradiction to the general wishes of the people, convened fifty delegates, to give advice in the present emergency, and assist in new-modelling the form of government.

On the 2d of February the delegates took their seats in the sovereign council; and the first measure adopted by this motley assembly was a decree, appointing a committee to make, within the term of a year, such improvements in the constitution as were conformable to the spirit and circumstances of the times, on the basis of general eligibility to the offices of government, and the extension of the elective franchise. “The people,” justly observes Mallet du Pan, “received with indifference a decree which did not amend their admirable regulations; many disapproved it, the revolutionists condemned its insufficiency, and all prudent persons were alarmed, as it was calculated to excite endless  
“ commotions.



“ commotions. From this moment the govern-  
“ ment, losing its poise, was only considered as  
“ a provisional committee ; and anarchy reared  
“ its head, among magistrates without power,  
“ and people without confidence.”

Soon after this impolitic partition of authority, Bern relinquished its claims on the Pays de Vaud, and made overtures of conciliation to the French Directory, and to Mengaud their agent in Switzerland. But these degrading measures only hastened the fall of the republic : Mengaud declared, “ that the present proceedings had no  
“ other object than to overthrow a vicious and  
“ corrupt government, and substitute one more  
“ conformable to that of the French and Cis-  
“ alpine republics, whose existence, safety, and  
“ tranquillity would always be exposed, as long  
“ as Switzerland remained under the despotism  
“ of a handful of avaricious magistrates, without  
“ spirit and without honour, and always ready  
“ to sell themselves to the enemies of France.” He then demanded the dissolution of the government, and the establishment of a provisional council, from which all the old magistrates should be excluded, and distributed a plan for moulding the Helvetic confederacy into a representative republic, similar to that of France. At the same time a mission was dispatched by the  
government

government of Bern to General Brune, who had succeeded Menard in the command of the French forces in the Pays de Vaud, deprecating the interference of a foreign power, and soliciting permission to make only a partial reform in their government. But Brune, either unprovided with instructions, or waiting for further reinforcements, proposed an armistice for fourteen days, which was eagerly accepted, and concluded on the 15th of February.

During this interval of awful suspense, the two parties of Bern struggled for superiority with increasing ardour. A few, who saw the danger of procrastination, proposed to establish a temporary dictatorship; but this wise measure, which might have saved the country, was defeated by party jealousy, when the avoyer Steiguer and four of his principal adherents were designated for that high office.

The fifty delegates, though persons of great moderation, and well affected to the constitution, yet being without experience, increased the confusion in the deliberations of the council; but, as the armistice drew towards a conclusion, and the designs of France became daily more manifest, the representations of Steiguer and Erlach had greater effect, and a ray of hope broke through the gloom of despondency. All  
ranks

ranks of people vied in demonstrations of attachment to the government; 20,000 militia were already assembled, full of enthusiasm, reposing the highest confidence in their leaders, and eager for the combat; religious ardour blended itself with the feelings of patriotism, and the undaunted spirit of their ancestors glowed in their bosoms. Numbers deserting from the Pays de Vaud were incorporated in a regiment under the name of the faithful legion; and the majority of the inhabitants seemed only to wait the advance of the Bernese troops, to rise against their oppressors. The forces of Soleure and Friburgh ranged themselves under the standard of Bern; the contingents of the other cantons, amounting to 5500 men, had already arrived in the vicinity of the army; and the smallest success would have ensured their co-operation, and more than tripled their numbers.

The chief command was entrusted to General d'Erlach, lord of Hindelbank, and member of the sovereign council; he was a veteran distinguished for military skill and undaunted courage, and for his great services had obtained a high rank in the armies of France.

Eager to avail himself of the ardour of his troops, Erlach, on the 26th of February, repaired to the sovereign council with eighty officers,  
members



members of that assembly : “ I come,” exclaimed he, “ before the expiration of the truce, to ask  
“ permission to disband the army. It is useless  
“ to expose so many of my brave fellow-soldiers  
“ to certain massacre, or to the disgrace of a  
“ defeat, which is inevitable in the positions we  
“ have been made to take. If you persist in  
“ your erroneous measures, I must give in my  
“ resignation ; such is my determined resolution,  
“ unless, recovering the sentiments of honour  
“ and patriotism, which seem extinguished in  
“ this council, you authorise me to employ  
“ the spirit and valour of the bravest of  
“ nations.”

His animated remonstrances overbore all opposition ; he was invested with unlimited powers, and, without a moment’s delay, disposed his operations and distributed his instructions for the grand attack, which he meditated at the expiration of the truce.

The combined forces of Bern, Soleure, and Friburgh, amounted to 25,000 men, and extended from the northern frontiers of the canton of Soleure, through Lengnau, Gottstadt, Buren, Nidau, Aarberg, and Morat, beyond Friburgh. They also occupied the strong position of Vuilly, between the lakes of Morat and Neuchatel, and pushed their advanced corps as

far as the vallies of Ormond, towards the fouth-eastern extremity of the lake of Geneva. By this position they covered the towns of Soleure, Bern, and Friburgh, and prevented all direct communication between the two French armies in the Pays de Vaud and the Bishopric of Basle.

The French force, amounting at this period to about 40,000 men, consisted of two armies, which occupied a large portion of the north-western and fouth-western parts of Switzerland. One of these armies, under General Brune, commander in chief, held in subjection the whole Pays de Vaud, and posted at Yverdun, Moudon, Estavayer, Avenche, and Payerne, which was the head-quarters, threatened Friburgh. The other, under General Schawembourg, occupied the canton and bishopric of Basle, and the towns of Bienne and Neuville, and formed a strong line of posts, along the high road leading from Basle to Bienne, through Munster and Court, to the pass of Pierre Pertuis; they were likewise advanced to Botzingen and Pieterlin, on the high road from Bienne to Soleure, not far from Lengnau.

The plan of offensive operations was arranged by Erlach in a masterly manner. The principal attack was to be directed against the army of  
Schawem-

Schawembourg, by the right wing and centre, consisting of 14,000 men, and the object was to possess themselves of the vallies of Munster and St. Imier, to seize the pass of Pierre Pertuis, which would cut off the retreat of the French, then to force the strong posts of Botzingen and Pieterlin, and bombard Bienne. In the meantime 7000 troops, which formed the left wing, were to attack General Brune, to drive him from Avenche, Estavayer, and Payerne, while a corps of 2000, posted in the vallies of Ormond, should advance by Aigle, and endeavour to harass his rear.

Erlach was confident of success; his troops were eager for the combat, and acquainted with the defiles of the country; and the inhabitants only waited their approach to rise against the French.

While Erlach was employed in distributing his instructions, he was thunderstruck with orders from Bern, which revoked his full powers, and commanded him to suspend hostilities; as a negociation was opened with General Brune. He instantly repaired to Bern, with a view to remonstrate against this fluctuation of counsels, and to urge the necessity of prompt and vigorous measures; but he found the situation of affairs totally changed, and wit-



nessed the fatal ascendancy of the French party.

On the very evening in which his manly representations roused the council to a sense of the common danger, an adjutant arrived from General Brune, announcing the receipt of full instructions from Paris, and requesting the government to send deputies for the purpose of adjusting an immediate accommodation. The temporising party, in conjunction with the adherents of France, availed themselves of the absence of Erlach and his associates, induced the council to agree to a conference with Brune, and on the following day his full powers were countermanded.

On the 27th two deputies repaired to the head-quarters at Payerne, and returned on the 28th with the ultimatum of General Brune, requiring the abdication of the magistrates, the immediate establishment of a provisional regency, the formation of a new constitution, on the basis of liberty and equality, and the release of all persons arrested for political opinions. He moreover insisted that the troops of Bern, and the Swiss contingents, should retire; and promised, on the fulfilment of these conditions, to quit the territory of Switzerland, and never to re-enter it, unless summoned by the new government.

On the departure of the deputies Brune dispersed a proclamation to the Swiss: “ My  
“ brave foldiers are your friends and brothers.  
“ In punishing tyranny they are eager to assist  
“ you in breaking its impious yoke. Amid the  
“ outrages committed by your oligarchy, I  
“ expected some return of reason, some signs of  
“ remorse. Neither ambition nor avarice shall  
“ disgrace our conduct. I come among you  
“ only to punish the guilty usurpers of your  
“ sovereignty. Be not uneasy for your personal  
“ safety, your property, your religion, or your  
“ political independence. The French govern-  
“ ment guarantees them to you. Be free; the  
“ French republic invites, and Nature orders you  
“ to be so.”

Mengaud issued a similar appeal, in which he exclaims, “ To regenerate Switzerland is not  
“ to disturb it. Who, except the magistrates of  
“ Bern and their adherents, are ignorant of the  
“ generosity and valour of the French armies?  
“ Do not take up arms; they are only brothers  
“ joining you against our common enemies.  
“ Their blows will not be dealt by chance; they  
“ will not fall upon the mistaken citizen, or  
“ peaceable labourer. The French army will  
“ be terrible only to that handful of perverse  
“ rulers,

“rulers, stubborn in frantic rage. We offer  
“you peace, and do you choose war?”

Will it be believed by posterity, did not the subjection of Switzerland authenticate the fact, that the rulers of a free and powerful people, beloved by their subjects, who had 30,000 men under arms, eager for the combat, and whose signal would have tripled that number, should hold any further conference with the authors of these insulting proclamations? Yet such was the infatuation of the magistrates, which can only be accounted for from the prevalence of French influence in the very bosom of the councils, and from the representations of the deputies from Zurich and Basle, who warmly recommended the acceptance of the new system, as the only means to avoid the impending storm.

The publication of Brune's ultimatum spread general indignation through all ranks of people; and the magistrates, overpowered with the universal clamour for instant hostilities, reluctantly ordered General Erlach to execute his plan of attack. But the timid, the treacherous, and the wavering still encouraged hopes of conciliating Brune, by partially acceding to his ultimatum; they were warmly seconded by the  
deputies



deputies of Zurich and Basle, who represented the folly of courting singly hostilities with France, offered their mediation, and perfidiously insinuated that Lucern and Schaffhausen were anxious for an accommodation. The government fatally attempted to renew the negotiation; they issued a decree agreeing to establish a new constitution on the basis of liberty and equality, declared the government provisional, until the new representatives should be elected; but they refused to convoke the primary assemblies until fifteen days after both armies had retired, and offered to form a new Helvetic confederacy, though without foreign interference. They consented to liberate, at the recommendation of the French Directory, all persons arrested for political opinions, and concluded the decree by solemnly assuring the people, that as soon as the danger was past, they would hear and redress all grievances, as far as the welfare of the country would justify.

They instantly dispatched deputies\* to notify this decree as their ultimatum to Brune; but this compound of humiliation and spirit, inde-

\* Weis burgomaster of Zurich, and Frisching treasurer of Bern, who was the head of the French party.

pendence and submission, had no effect: Brune, after detaining the deputies in suspense till late in the evening, refused to treat with them, because they brought no definitive answer to his propositions, and is said to have added, “I will repair to Bern, accompanied with  
“ some huffars and chaffeurs, and pay a visit to  
“ the new government.” At the moment of his departure from Payerne, he also addressed a proclamation to the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud, containing bitter invectives against England, and virulent abuse of the government of Bern: after some general praises of the spirit and wisdom of their conduct, he observes: “Redouble your watch-  
“ fulness against the common enemy; the  
“ partisans of Bern insinuate themselves among  
“ you. Instead of your own freedom, they  
“ offer you a new despotism under the infi-  
“ dious mask of Bernese liberty. What  
“ liberty can you receive from men who  
“ annihilate the first feelings of freedom? What  
“ liberty is that which begs succours from the  
“ despot of England, the enemy of the peace  
“ of the world?

“ Bern, the scandal of Helvetia, forged  
“ chains for all the people of the Helvetic  
“ confederacy: her hordes domineered over  
“ Friburgh,

“ Friburgh, Soleure, and Lucern ; her magi-  
“ strates defiled their hands with the sceptre of  
“ usurpation. The measure of her crimes is  
“ full. The ridiculous empire of Bern already  
“ falls to the ground.”



## CHAP. III.

*Insubordination among the Bernese Troops—Infatuation of the Government—Contradictory Orders issued to the Army—Surprise of the advanced Posts, and Defeat of the Swiss at Lengnau and Grange—Capture of Friburgh and Soleure—Retreat of Erlach—Alarming Mutinies among the Soldiers, who massacre several of their Officers—Landsturm—Insurrection of the Populace at Bern—Abolition of the Government and Establishment of a Provisional Committee—Attack of Laupen, Neunec, and Gummenen—Total Defeat of the Swiss Army, and Surrender of Bern—Escape of Steiguer—Massacre of Erlach—Instances of Swiss Heroism—Change of the Helvetic Confederacy—Resistance of the smaller Cantons—Final Subjugation of Switzerland—New Divisions and Government.*

**D**URING these negotiations an alarming spirit of disaffection had spread among the troops. On the evening of the 28th, Erlach, after

after ineffectually attempting to obtain the renewal of his full powers, returned to the army, which he found in a state of insubordination and mutiny. Reports were circulated by the French agents, that their leaders were corrupted, and had sold them to the enemy; several battalions revolted; even some of the officers refused to march, and consternation and distrust spread through the ranks. With extreme difficulty Erlach composed the ferment, prepared for a desperate resistance, should he be attacked on the expiration of the armistice; and as he still had under his command 20,000 troops, and as the Swiss contingents, though enjoined only to cover their respective territories, would have co-operated with his army, on the first dawn of success, his efforts might yet have delivered Switzerland.

In this interval the ultimatum of the government being rejected by Brune, a new order was dispatched to Erlach, empowering him to execute his plan of attack, on the expiration of the armistice. But this order was scarcely issued to the troops, by whom it was received with enthusiasm, than a counter-order was transmitted, as a new conference was opened with the French general.

It

It is impossible to describe the indignation and despair which these contradictory orders excited among the troops, many of whom had actually marched to the attack. They withdrew all confidence from their officers, considered them as accomplices in the destruction of their country; numbers indignantly quitted their standards, and Erlach, induced to act on the defensive, waited with anxious solicitude the event of the negotiations.

But the government, deceived by the insidious delays and equivocal expressions of Brune, and infatuated with the opinion that their terms would be accepted, either neglected sending intelligence to Erlach that the conferences were broken off, or the deputies from Payerne did not reach Bern till it was too late to apprise him that Brune had rejected their ultimatum. In fact, opposite accounts arrived hourly from the capital; contradictory orders were issued; the agents of Brune and Schawembourg industriously spread reports of the prolongation of the armistice; the greatest confusion prevailed among the troops; the generals were without concert, and the officers knew not whom to obey. Hence the Swiss army was taken unawares; the French were at the gates of Friburgh, while the magistrates  
were



were immersed in sleep; the important posts of Lengnau and Grange, which covered Soleure, were surprised; and the first notice which Erlach received of the renewal of hostilities was the defeat of his right and left wings.

The extraordinary circumstances which led to these events are detailed by a French officer\*, who served in the army of Bern, and received his information from General Graffenreid himself.

On the expiration of the armistice, at ten in the evening, General Graffenreid, who commanded the right wing of the Swiss, stationed at Buren, expected every moment an attack from the French, on the side of Soleure, which was covered by the strong posts of Lengnau and Grange. Lengnau was defended by 750 Oberlanders, Grange by the advanced guard of the troops of Soleure and Bern, under Gibelin. In this moment of suspense an estafette from General Schawembourg arrived at the headquarters of Graffenried, with a message, importing, that the plenipotentiaries from the cantons of Bern, Soleure, and Friburgh had repaired to the head-quarters of General Brune, and were engaged in arranging an accommodation. Graf-

\* Danican, *Conquête de la Suisse par le General Brune*.  
Cassandre, p. 48.

fenried, trusting to this intelligence, dispatched orders to the commanders at Lengnau and Grange not to commit hostilities. These orders were taken into consideration by a council of officers at Grange, several of whom were of opinion it was only a feint, and that even should negotiations be renewed, it would be more prudent to remain under arms, and not solely trust to French faith.

During these discussions, a French officer, taken near the advanced posts, was brought to Gibelin, and being questioned, declared he was deputed by General Schawembourg to the post of St. Joseph, to prevent the effusion of blood, since the negotiations were renewed with the three cantons, and an armistice concluded. "The French general," he added, "who commands in that quarter, and has orders to attack at break of day, is unacquainted with this event."

The Swiss generals, duped by these accounts, ordered their troops, who were fatigued with eight days' incessant duty, into their respective cantonments. Between three and four in the morning the French attacked the whole line from Dornec to Friburgh; the post of Lengnau was surprised and carried, and the French column marched rapidly towards Grange. But Gibelin,  
roused

roused by the roar of the cannon at Lengnau, had time to collect his troops, and made an obstinate resistance. Although his force did not exceed 1200 men, and the French amounted to several thousands, he did not retire until he had sustained a conflict of six hours, and found that 1200 fresh troops, whom he expected, did not arrive. He retreated into a wood: the French, meeting with little opposition, advanced to the walls of Soleure, and Schawembourg, in terms of unexampled ferocity, demanded the surrender of the town\*.

While the magistrates, intimidated with this menace, were hesitating, their terror was increased by a stratagem. Two couriers, in the livery of Bern, galloped to the gate of the town, and, being admitted, exclaimed, that Bern had surrendered to the victorious troops of General Brune. This account spread general alarm:

\* “ The Executive Directory orders me,” he says, “ to take possession of the town; if I meet with the least resistance, or a single drop of blood be spilt, the members of the government shall answer for it with their heads; and I must see this executed in the most inexorable manner. Notify the will of the Directory to the members of your government. I grant you half an hour to determine, after which time I shall burn your town and put the garrison to the sword.”



1200 men, who were on the point of joining Gibelin, dispersed in an instant; the faction devoted to France, though small, was augmented by the timid and wavering; and in less than an hour Soleure capitulated.

Situated in the centre of the army, Erlach was surprised at the suddenness of this attack, and kept in check by a feint of General Schawembourg. On receiving information that Friburg and Soleure had surrendered, to avoid being flanked, he retreated towards the capital, concentrated his forces, and occupied a strong line, extending from Frauenbrunnen to the north, on the high road between Bern and Soleure, and passing through the intermediate posts of Laupen, Gummenen, Aarberg, Friesenberg, and Schepfen, to Neunec on the west, between Friburgh and Bern. This retreat before a foreign army, unexampled in the annals of Switzerland, increased the fury of the soldiers, and heightened their distrust in their officers. The militia of Arau indignantly quitted the army, and their example was followed by numbers in the right wing, under the command of General Buren. The troops of the central division, who had repulsed several attacks of the enemy, retreated in sullen despair: the surprise and slaughter of the battalion at Lengnau, the  
capture

capture of Soleure and Friburgh without resistance, and the order for an instant retreat, were considered as proofs of treachery; and this spirit of suspicion was inflamed by printed letters circulated by the French agents, asserting that the Swiss were betrayed by their officers \*. They rose in a body at Nidau, and were with difficulty prevented from assassinating Colonel de Crofs: they no longer listened to the orders of their leaders; but uttered the most direful imprecations against their commander. The left wing alone retaining some degree of subordination, though gloomy and desponding, occupied the strong posts of Neunec, Laupen, and Gummenen.

On the 3d the general confusion was increased by sounding the alarm-bell throughout the country, which overspread the roads with swarms of peasants of all ages, and women, ill armed and without order.

Late in the evening, large bodies of the left wing mutinied, and tumultuously deserting their

\* Danican asserts, that the French agents, taking the advantage of a high wind, threw many of these papers from the top of a steeple into the Bernese camp; Cassandre, p. 87. and Mallet du Pan declares, that above 2000 Bernese soldiers received similar notes, stating the perfidy of General d'Erlach.

posts at Gummenen and Laupen, wounded several of their officers, and marched to the gates of the capital; disregarding the intreaties of the magistrates, they demanded new leaders, broke their officers, and then re-elected them. On the following morning, after apparently returning to a sense of their duty, they were again inflamed by the perfidious representations of traitors; in a sudden paroxysm of fury they massacred Colonels Stettler and Ryhiner, their commanding officers, deaf to the intreaties of de Steiguer's niece, a beautiful young woman, who threw herself between the chiefs and their assassins. They had no sooner committed this act of enormity, than, struck with remorse, they returned to their posts, and fought with unexampled bravery.

In the midst of these horrors, the French party gained a total ascendancy at Bern; and the populace, instigated by a report that the magistrates had sold their city to the French Directory, tumultuously seized the arsenal, and abolished the existing government. The magistrates were compelled to abdicate; and a new provisional regency, with the exclusion of those persons to whom Brune objected, was hastily established.

Hoping



Hoping to conciliate the French general, the new magistrates hastened to notify this change in the government, and offered to disband their troops, provided the French would not quit the posts they then occupied. But Brune, apprised of the confusion and anarchy which prevailed in the city and army, rejected this offer, and required that Bern should admit a French garrison. Even the members of the revolutionary government did not venture to brave the fury of the people, by surrendering the capital to the French commanders, whose perfidy they now detected, and issued orders for a general attack. At the close of this fatal day, the venerable avoyer Steiguer solemnly deposed the insignia of his office, and, accompanied by his brother and family, hastened to Frauenbrunnen, where he joined General d'Erlach.

The army of Bern now destined to make a final effort for expiring liberty, was reduced to a melancholy state of insubordination and weakness ; it consisted of only 14,000 men, enraged against their officers, and disunited among themselves ; while the contingents stood aloof, and refused to act with so disorganised a body. With this small number of disaffected troops, Erlach, well aware of his desperate situation, prepared to encounter 40,000 veterans, flushed with conquest, and in a high state of discipline. In reply to Danican, who made some observations on the conduct of Brune, he exclaimed, " I expect nothing but dishonour or death." And in

the morning of the conflict, he said to his aid-de-camp, “ I have seen the sun rise, but shall never see it set ;” his presence of mind, however, did not forsake him ; he made the most skilful dispositions, and performed the part of a general and a soldier.

At one in the morning General Rampon attacked Laupen, Neunec, and Gummenen ; he was repulsed at Gummenen, but, after an obstinate resistance, dislodged the Swiss from the two other posts, and entrenched himself in a wood above Wangen, only two leagues from the capital. Graffenried, having received a reinforcement of 1500 men, collected his troops, forced the entrenchments, drove the enemy from post to post, and from wood to wood, beyond the ravine of Neunec, and compelled them to retreat three leagues, with the loss of 2000 men, and several pieces of artillery. His brave troops, flushed with success, and eager to prosecute their victory, were rapidly advancing to the recovery of Friburgh ; when he received orders to suspend hostilities, as Bern was in the possession of the French. The troops heard this intelligence with rage and indignation, accused their leader of falsehood and treachery, and disbelieved the orders, until he had read them not less than fifty times. He gradually mollified their resentment, and they finally separated, and returned home in sorrow and despair \*.

\* An account of this gallant action is given by Graffenried himself, who was Quarter-master-General of the Army of Bern ; it is published in the *Hamburgh Politisches Journal* for May 1798, p. 461.



The capture of Bern was preceded by the total defeat of the main body, under General d'Erlach, who, with less than 7000 men, withstood the repeated assaults of General Schawembourg, at the head of 18,000. Under him the avoyer Steiguer fought in the ranks, and animated the troops, by his exhortations and example, to deeds of valour not surpassed by their heroic ancestors. The post of Frauenbrunnen being forced, Erlach rallied his men, and was repeatedly compelled to yield to superior numbers: being driven from one position he took another; after four desperate engagements, he resisted a fifth assault under the walls of Bern, and did not finally abandon the contest till his little army had lost 2000 men, and the troops of Brune and Schawembourg were on the point of uniting, while the capital was unprepared to withstand a siege. Bern surrendered to the first summons of General Brune, and a tree of liberty was planted in his presence. Within the city the fury of the populace was controlled by the presence of an armed force; but the broken remains of the retreating army committed the most horrid excesses, assassinated several officers, and the two adjutant-generals Kroufaz and Gumoens.

Through these frantic hordes of disbanded soldiery, Steiguer and Erlach were hastening towards the mountains of Hasli and Oberland, where the borders of the lake of Thun offer an impregnable retreat, and whither had been conveyed large quan-



tities of arms and ammunition, thirty pieces of artillery, and a considerable treasure. The venerable avoyer, in disguise, and led by a peasant, passed unknown through crowds of his enraged countrymen, and along roads infested with the light troops of the enemy, and reached the lake of Thun, after a walk of five leagues; reposing himself for a short time on the trunk of a tree, he crossed Mount Brunnig into the canton of Underwalden, and found a refuge at Bregenz, in the Austrian territories\*.

Erlach, after miraculously escaping from the repeated assaults of the enemy, was hastening towards the mountains of Oberland, undaunted with defeat, and inspired with hopes of collecting his shattered forces, to make another effort. Recognised by some straggling soldiers near Mufingen, upon the high road between Bern and Thun, he was instantly seized, bound, and placed in a cart, with an intention of conveying him to the capital; but another desperate band assaulted him, and, amidst reproaches and execrations, massacred him with their bayonets and hatchets.

The French generals acknowledge that the Swiss fought with unparalleled bravery, and that the subjection of Bern was the consequence of a most bloody conflict, in which the militia, levied in a mass, and without experience, gave the strongest proofs of

\* This venerable and intrepid patriot did not long survive the fall of his country; he died at Augsburg in December 1799, aged 70.

courage and despair. “ Many of those brave people,” said the French officer who delivered the Swiss standards to the Directory, “ without any arms “ but scythes and clubs, placing themselves at the “ mouths of the cannon, were mowed down with “ grape shot ; and rejected the quarter which we “ offered them from humanity.”

It would be endless to detail the numerous instances of magnanimity and heroism displayed by these brave defenders of their expiring liberty ; but I cannot omit one glorious effort, which surpasses the memorable sacrifice of the Spartans at Thermopylæ. Eight hundred youths devoted themselves to death : overpowered by numbers, they refused quarter ; seven who escaped the first carnage disdained to survive their brothers in arms, and, rushing into the ranks of the enemy, perished under the ruins of their country. In these bloody conflicts not only the men displayed unparalleled bravery, but even women rushed into the heat of the battle, threw themselves on the cannon of the enemy, and clung to the wheels to prevent them from advancing.

It affords a melancholy subject of regret that such desperate efforts of heroism were rendered unavailing ; and the history of this fatal catastrophe plainly refutes the assertion, that the people in the canton of Bern were dissatisfied with their government.

The subjugation of Bern speedily decided the fate of Switzerland. Notwithstanding the renewal of the Helvetic Confederacy at the diet of Arau, and



the solemn oath taken by each deputy in the name of his state, to defend their liberties to the last extremity, only 5500 troops marched to join the army of Bern, and of them not a single soldier appeared in the field of battle ; an omen of speedy subjection. Basle had previously separated from the antient confederacy, Zurich, Soleure, Friburgh, and Schaffhausen instantly accepted the new constitution, and Lucern, after displaying some signs of ineffectual opposition, was reduced to submission. Five of the little cantons alone maintained a momentary struggle, defeated the French troops sent to subdue them, and compelled Schawembourg to respect their independence, and to conclude a treaty, by which he engaged not to interfere with their government. In perfidious violation of this treaty, he marched to Lucern with a considerable army, and detaching Uri, Schweitz, Zug, and Glarus, and the upper district of Underwalden, attacked the lower district with his whole force, exterminated this small remnant of Swiss patriots, and secured the submission of the natives by an unexampled carnage \*.

Thus the Helvetic Confederacy was dissolved ; Geneva, Mulhausen, Bienne, and the bishopric of Basle, were annexed to France ; the remainder of the country, except the Grisons, modelled into a republic one and indivisible, divided into eighteen

\* For an account of this carnage see the note in Letter 26.



departments \*, and governed by a senate, a great council, and five directors, who first assembled at Arau, and were afterwards transferred to Lucern.

During the campaign of 1799 part of Switzerland experienced a momentary deliverance from French oppression ; but from the unfortunate misunderstanding between the Courts of Petersburg and Vienna, the whole country again fell under subjection ; and the directorial government was re-established.

This government, however, was of short duration ; the dissolution of the directorial power in France was followed by a similar innovation in Switzerland ; and a provisional government was established, which was first seated at Lucern, and on the progress of the Austrians, in 1799, removed to Bern.

Switzerland being wrested from the combined forces, and peace established with the Emperor by the treaty of Luneville, the French Embassador transmitted the plan of a new constitution, and new divisions to the provisional government.

According to this plan, Switzerland, including the country of the Grisons, was divided into seventeen cantons, a table of which is annexed, with the

\* It was divided into twenty-two departments, including the Grisons, who were to be compelled to enter into the indivisible union. The country of the Grisons was divided into four cantons ; but their incorporation did not take place. See the index map of Switzerland, according to the new divisions, and the geographical tables of its ancient and present state, at the end of this Introduction.

number of members deputed by each to the new Helvetic Diet. This body consisted of 77 members, chosen by the representatives of each district, and assembled at Bern, to organise the new constitution.

The legislative authority was vested in the Senate, composed of two Landammans and twenty-three Counsellors. The executive power was lodged in a little council of four Senators, in which each of the Landammans presided in turn. The Landamman in office was to receive a salary of 50,000 French livres, and the other Landamman and four Counsellors 10,000 each. The salaries of the Senators were not to exceed 6000 livres \*.

Each canton was governed by a Prefect, nominated by the Landamman, and was provided with its interior administration, which approved or rejected the projects of laws presented by the Senate.

By the conditions of eligibility universal suffrage was abolished; and no person admitted to any public office, unless he was a proprietor of land, or exercised an independent profession, and paid a contribution to the public burdens, the amount of which was regulated by each canton.

The members of the diet being chiefly persons of violent and revolutionary principles, introduced

\* The attachment of the people of Switzerland to their ancient government has been revived by contrasting its economy with the profuse expenditure of the revolutionary system, by which the public burdens have been increased in tenfold proportion.



several changes in the articles of this constitution which were oppressive to the people, and tended to render the executive power nearly absolute. Their vexatious proceedings, and unbounded profusion, irritated the nation, and many of the citizens of Bern who were chosen members of the Elective Assembly, commenced their opposition by refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the government, which was framed in the revolutionary language. Their example was followed by the deputies of the small cantons, among whom Alois Reding, Deputy from Schwitz, and Muller, Deputy from Uri, distinguished themselves by their firm and spirited resistance to every measure detrimental to the general welfare, and threatened to secede from the diet.

The executive power, alarmed at this unexpected resistance, attempted to conciliate the little cantons by admitting their deputies to the diet, without taking the oath, though they refused the same exemption to the deputies of Bern.

It is however but justice to add, that this diet, almost unanimously, refused its consent to the cession of the Vallais demanded by France. Having thus offended France, and disgusted the Swiss nation, the adherents of the old government, who are still numerous in Switzerland, drove these despots from the helm, with the acquiescence, though not at the instigation of France; and a counter revolution took place in October last, which dissolved the diet, and re-established the provisional



visional government as it existed before the 29th of May. The effects of this change are salutary to the welfare of Switzerland; the most violent revolutionists are removed from the offices of power, and their places supplied by persons generally attached to the antient government.

The fate of Switzerland is still doubtful and uncertain. The majority of all ranks are eager to restore the antient order of things, and zealous to resist any further dismemberment of their territories. How far their efforts may be favoured, by the conclusion of a definitive peace, time only can discover. It is however to be hoped, that the intercession of foreign powers, and the moderation which seems to have taken place in the counsels of France, may restore this once free and happy country to its former independence and integrity\*.

\* The principal events recorded in this Historical Sketch, besides private and authentic information, are drawn from the following works, which have been carefully examined and compared:—The Official Documents published by the French Government.—*Bulletin Helvetique* for 1798, published at Lausanne.—Leonard Meister ueber den gang der politischen Bewegungen in der Schweiz.—Poffelt's *Neueste Weltkunde* for 1798; and *Geschichte der Helvetischen Revolution*, in his *Europaische Annalen* for 1798; 1st, 3d, and 5th Number.—*Helvetischer Revolutions Almanack* for 1799.—*Hamburgh Politisches Journal*, which contains many curious particulars relating to the subjection of Switzerland, Part I. for 1798.—*Danican Conquête de la Suisse par le General Brune*, in *Cassandre, ou quelques Reflexions sur la Revolution Française, et la Situation actuelle de l'Europe*, Chapitre deux.—*Mallet du Pan, Essai Historique sur la Destruction de la Ligue et de la Liberté Helvetiques*, *Mercur Britannique*, No. 1, 2, 3.—*Coup d'œil Politique sur le Continent*. Chapitre 7.—*Dissolution of the Swiss Confederacy*, in *Planta's excellent History of the Helvetic Confederacy*, vol. ii. ch. 10.—

# THE THIRTEEN CANTONS OF SWITZERLAND §.

*Note.*—† signifies the Catholic Religion, \* the Reformed, and ‡ Mixed.

		Square Miles.	Population.	Contingent.	Æra of Reception into the Confederacy.
The ancient Cantons.	Zuric *	676	175,000	1400	1351
	Bern *	3840	374,000	2000	1352
	Lucern †	544	100,000	1200	1332
	Uri †	550	26,000	400	1315
	Schweitz †	326	23,000	600	1315
	Underwalden †	179	23,500	400	1315
	Zug †	102	20,000	400	1352
	Glarus ‡	336	16,000	400	1351
The new Cantons.	Baſſe *	160	40,000	400	1501
	Friburgh †	467	73,000	800	1481
	Soleure †	288	45,000	600	1481
	Schaffhaufen *	128	30,000	400	1501
	Appenzel ‡	256	51,000	600	1513

## SUBJECT BAILLIAGES.

	Square geographical Miles.	Population.	Contingent.	Sovereigns.
Thurgau †	266	60,000	600	VIII Antient Cantons.
Rheinthal †	84	13,000	200	Do. and Appenzel.
Sargans †	148	12,000	300	VIII Antient Cantons.
Gaster †	149	9,000		{ Schweiz and Glarus.
Uznach †				
Gams †				
Rapperschwyl †	8	5,000		Zuric and Bern.
Baden †	138	24,000	200	Zuric, Bern and Glarus.
The Upper Free Bailiwicks †	85	20,000	300	{ VIII Antient Cantons.
The Lower Free Bailiwicks †				
				{ Zuric, Bern and Glarus.

§ For the tables relative to the ancient states of Switzerland, I am principally indebted to Planta's excellent History of the Helvetic Confederacy.

Brem-

# SUBJECT BAILLIAGES, Continued.

	Square geogra- phical Miles.	Population-	Contin- gent.	Sovereigns.
Bremgarten †	150	5,000		{ Zuric, Bern, and Glarus
Mellingen †				
Schwartzenburgh †				
Morat *				
Granfon *	110	40,000		{ Bern and Friburgh.
Orbe and Eschalens †				
Bellinzona †				
Riviera or Polesse †				
Val di Blenzo †	205	33,000		{ Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden.
Lugano †				
Locarno †				
Val Maggia †				
Mendrisio †	263	53,000	400	{ All the Cantons ex- cept Appenzel.
	263	30,000	200	
	158	24,000	100	
	67	16,000	100	

## CONFEDERATED STATES.

	Square geogra- phical Miles.	Population.	Contin- gent.
The Abbot of St. Gallen	124	45,000 }	1000
Alte Landschaft †			
Toggenburgh †			
The City of St. Gallen *	188	46,000 }	200
Town and Territory of Bienne *	144	8,300	200
Mulhausen *		5,500	200
		8,000	

## ALLIES.

The Grison Leagues †	2304	150,000	
Their Subject Provinces †	960	100,000	
The Valais †	1280	100,000	
Neuchatel and Valengin *	240	40,500	
Geneva *	88	34,000	
Part of the Bishopric of Basle allied to the Cantons *	106	24,000	

## SOVEREIGNS under the Protection of the FOREST CANTONS.

The Abbot of Engelberg †	28	4,500	
Gerfau †		1,000	



A TABLE of the SWISS DEPARTMENTS or CANTONS,  
according to the Division of 1798, in alphabetical Order.

Cantons.		Chief Towns.
1. Argau.	The north-eastern Part of the Canton of Bern	Arau.
2. Baden.	The County of Baden, the Free Bailiages, and a small Portion of the south-western Part of Zurich	Baden.
3. Basle.	The ancient Canton of Basle	Basle.
4. Bellinzona.	The Bailliages of Bellinzona, Riviera, and Val Leventina	Bellinzona.
5. Bern.	The central and western Part of the ancient Canton, with the District of Schwartzzenburgh	Bern.
6. Lemman.	The Pays de Vaud, the Districts of Aigle and Bex, the Bailliage of Orbe and Granson, and the south-western Part of the Jura	Lausanne.
7. Linth.	The Canton of Glarus, and the Bailliages of Wallenstadt	Glarus.
8. Lucern.	The ancient Canton of Lucern	Lucern.
9. Lugano.	The Bailliages of Lugano, Mendrisio, and Balerna, and Locarno	Lugano.
10. Oberland.	The southern District of the Canton of Bern	Thun.
11. Sarine and Broie.	The ancient Canton of Friburgh	Friburgh.
12. Schaffhausen.	The ancient Canton of Schaffhausen	Schaffhausen.
13. Sentis.	The Canton of Appenzel, the Town of St. Gallen, and the Dominions of the Abbot	St. Gallen.
14. Soleure.	The ancient Canton of Soleure	Soleure.
15. Thurgau.	The Bailliage or County of Thurgau	Frauenfeld.
16. Waldstaetten.	The Cantons of Uri, Schweiz, Unterwalden; and Zug	Schweitz.
17. Vallais.	The Upper and Lower Vallais	Sion.
18. Zurich.	Most of the ancient Cantons; including the Town of Winterthur	Zurich.

\* \* Geneva, Bienne, Mulhausen, and the whole Bishopric of Basle, are incorporated with the Dominions of the French Republic.

A TABLE

A TABLE of the DEPARTMENTS or CANTONS of SWITZERLAND, according to the Constitution of the 29th of May, 1801, with the proportional Number of Representatives deputed by each to the Diet.

1	Bern, in its former extent, except the Pays de Vaud and Argovie	9
2	Zuric; in its former extent	8
3	Lucern, idem	5
4	Uri, idem	1
5	Schweitz, idem	1
6	Underwalden, idem	1
7	Zug, idem	1
8	{ Glarus, with the addition of the Bailliages of Sargans, Werdenberg, Gaster, Uznac, and Rappenschweil	5
9	{ Appenzel, with the addition of the Tockenburgh, St. Gallen, and the Rheinthal	6
10	Soleure, in its former extent	3
11	{ Friburgh, with the addition of the Bailliages of Morat, and Schwartzzenburgh	4
12	{ Basle, with the addition of the lower part of the Frickthal to Seckingen	3
13	Schaffhausen, re-united with Thurgovie	6
14	{ Argovie, re-united with Baden, and with the Upper Part of the Frickthal	6
15	The Pays de Vaud, in its former extent	7
16	The Grifons *	6
17	The Italian Bailliages	5

That Part of the Vallais which will not be ceded to France, is to be united with one of the neighbouring Cantons †.

\* The Grifons were extremely averse to be incorporated with the Helvetic Republic; violent commotions ensued, and their acquiescence is only secured by force.

† The cession of the Vallais is still an object of contention, and nothing but the irresistible power of France will compel the Swiss to submit to its dismemberment.

ADDITIONS

## ADDITIONS TO VOLUME THE FIRST.

### *Note to Page 25.*

THE subjects of the abbot of St. Gallen amounted to not less than 90,000. His dominions comprised, first, the ancient territory of the abbey (Alte Landschaften); secondly, the country of Tockenburgh. That county was purchased, in 1468, by Ulric abbot of St. Gallen, from the last count, who died without issue male. As the people possessed very considerable privileges, and the abbot was desirous of extending his prerogatives, frequent disputes arose, which increased after the Reformation, when part of the inhabitants embraced the Protestant doctrines. These disputes were frequently renewed; the abbot was supported by the Catholic, the people by the Protestant, cantons; and in 1709 a civil war broke out in Switzerland, which is usually called the war of the Tockenburgh, and was terminated, in 1712, by the pacification of Arau. In 1718 the constitution of the Tockenburgh was settled, in which the prerogatives of the abbot and the privileges of the people were precisely ascertained. Still, however, the opposite pretensions of the abbot and the people produced occasional disputes, and in the effervescence of the revolution the inhabitants vied with the Basilians, and the borderers of the lake of Zurich, in their early demands of emancipation. They rose in January, paid the sum of 14,500 florins, the original purchase money, to the bailif, drove him from the country, planted trees of liberty in different parts of the district, and even in the midst  
of



of the abbey. On the 31st of January the prince abbot quitted St. Gallen, and took refuge in the Brisgau.

In the new division of Switzerland, the dominions of the abbot, and the town of St. Gallen, are comprised in the canton of Sentis, of which St. Gallen is the capital.

The people soon found the difference between their new and antient rulers; for in the month of May they were so dissatisfied with their government, that the French were obliged to send troops into the country to quell an insurrection.

*Note to Page 57.*

On the 2d of May 1798, a French column under the command of General Trefinet, after defeating the Swiss peasants on the borders of the lake of Zurich, and pillaging and burning several villages, arrived at Einsidlin. They found the abbey deserted by all the monks except one, and stripped of all its treasures. The image of the Virgin was sent to Paris as a companion to that of Loretto, and General Schawembourg ordered the abbey to be instantly demolished in his presence. Planta, p. 442.

The demolition of this building was announced to the new Helvetic diet assembled at Arau, and is thus recorded in the new annals of Switzerland:

“ Citizen Haas informed the Assembly, that General Schawembourg had resolved to destroy the convent of Einsidlin, and to preserve only such buildings as were necessary for the purposes of agriculture; that no vestige of that den of fanaticism and superstition should remain.”

*Meniteur, 3 Prairial, l' An 6.*

*To conclude the Note in Vol. I. Page 321.*

THE respectable abbot of Engelberg died of chagrin, soon after he received the insulting letter of Mengaud. The unfeeling conduct of the French agent, and the virtues of the venerable abbot, are described in a recent publication; and the truth of the account must forcibly strike the reader, as the author cannot be suspected of partiality to the aristocracy and clergy of Switzerland.

“ With infinite concern I read that part of the letter which speaks of the death of the abbot of Engelberg. It seems this venerable priest did not long survive the violent attack of the commissary Mengaud. \* \* \*

“ The image of the venerable abbot for ever fills my imagination. His letter to the French commissary was so unlike the message of a sovereign prince, of a neutral and independent power, that it was framed to have flattered the vanity, and softened the violence, of the most intrepid revolutionist. Alas! he had been no enemy to the French revolution!—he loved mankind too well to condemn an experiment in its favour: to promote general happiness was the sole purpose of his life, and, while the abbot of Engelberg existed, there was at least one sovereign prince who lived only for his people; who for them had corrected the frugality of Nature; who had formed a paradise on the icy confines of the world; who had excluded the moral winter of the soul, and, while the tempest raged without, had opened a spring of happiness in every heart; \* \* \* \* \*  
——who had not only scattered blessings in profusion, but made his people participators of his power.” \* \*

VOL. I.

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“ The

“ The gentle spirit of the good old abbot was not proof against such a rude compound of ignorance and inhumanity. He appeared fitted for the enjoyment of a long and virtuous old age, but has sunk prematurely to the tomb ! The remembrance of his virtues will be for ever embalmed in my heart ; he sleeps secure from farther insult ; but his convent becomes the prey of revolutionary inquisitors.”—*Sketches of the State of Manners and Opinions in the French Republic at the Close of the Eighteenth Century.*

*Addition to the Account of Lavater, p. 90.*

Lavater died in January 1801.







# MAP OF SWITZERLAND,

Marked with  
the ROUTES of FOUR TOURS  
made in the Years 1776, 1779, 1783, and 1786.

BY  
The Rev.<sup>d</sup> WILL<sup>m</sup>. COXE, AMERS-FAS.

LONDON.  
Published as the Act directs  
by T. CADELL, Strand.  
Jan<sup>y</sup> 26. 1789.

## OBSERVATIONS.

The Thirteen Cantons of Switzerland

The Eight ancient Cantons

- |           |               |                |
|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| + Zurich  | + Schwytz     | + Basle        |
| + Berne   | + Unterwalden | + Friburgh     |
| + Lucerne | + Zug         | + Soleure      |
| + Uri     | + Glarus      | + Schaffhausen |

The Five new Cantons

- |               |               |             |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| + Appenzel A. | + Appenzel S. | + Valais    |
| + Grynne      | + Val de Rive | + Geneva    |
| + Nyon        | + Vaud        | + Neuchâtel |
| + Montreux    | + Yverdon     | + Bâle      |

Subjects to the Cantons or their Allies

- |               |               |             |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| + Thurgau     | + St. Gallen  | + Grisons   |
| + Appenzel A. | + Appenzel S. | + Valais    |
| + Grynne      | + Val de Rive | + Geneva    |
| + Nyon        | + Vaud        | + Neuchâtel |

Subjects to the Cantons or their Allies

- |               |               |             |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| + Thurgau     | + St. Gallen  | + Grisons   |
| + Appenzel A. | + Appenzel S. | + Valais    |
| + Grynne      | + Val de Rive | + Geneva    |
| + Nyon        | + Vaud        | + Neuchâtel |

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| + Grynne      | + Val de Rive | + Geneva    |
| + Nyon        | + Vaud        | + Neuchâtel |

Subjects to the Cantons or their Allies

- |               |               |             |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| + Thurgau     | + St. Gallen  | + Grisons   |
| + Appenzel A. | + Appenzel S. | + Valais    |
| + Grynne      | + Val de Rive | + Geneva    |
| + Nyon        | + Vaud        | + Neuchâtel |

British Statute Miles 69 1/2 to a Degree.

Common German Miles 15 to a Degree.

French Leagues or Travelling Hours 20 to 2 Degree.



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## LETTERS, &c.

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### LETTER. I.

*Route through the Black Forest—Source of the Danube.*

DEAR SIR, Donefchingen, July 21, 1776.

I AM now at Donefchingen, in my way towards Switzerland; a country long celebrated for the peculiarities of its different governments, and the singular beauties conferred upon it by nature. If it will not be trespassing on your patience, I propose to trouble you with some account of my tour, for I am persuaded, that I shall travel with much greater profit to myself; as the reflection that my observations are to be communicated to you, will render me more attentive and accurate in forming them.

VOL. I.

B

We



## LETTER I.

We quitted Strasburgh yesterday, and crossed the Rhine to Kehl, formerly an important fortress belonging to Strasburgh when an imperial city. It was also strongly fortified by the French, who took possession of it in 1648: being ceded to the Empire at the peace of Ryfwic, the Emperor consigned it to the house of Baden, reserving to himself the right of a garrison. Since that period it has been twice attacked by the French, and as during the last siege, in 1733, the works were considerably damaged, the imperial garrison has been withdrawn. At present, there are only the ruins of the ancient fortifications; and by way of garrison, a few invalids belonging to the Margrave of Baden. From Kehl we proceeded to Offenburgh, a small imperial town; and soon after, entered the beautiful valley of Kinsing: we passed through Gengenbach, another small imperial town, finely situated, and continued our journey by the side of the small river Kinsing; rising gradually for several leagues together, until we found ourselves in the midst of the Black Forest. The country, as we ascended, became more wild and romantic, and the river more rapid; on each hand mountains, whose acclivities were finely cultivated, and whose tops were richly covered with a continual forest. Several small streams  
of

of the clearest water rolled down the sides of the mountains, in numberless cascades, and uniting, fell into the Kinzig. The views were so exceedingly diversified, the villages so delightfully situated, and the cottages so extremely picturesque, that we almost seemed to have anticipated the romantic beauties of Switzerland.

✓ Doneschingen is the principal residence of the prince of Furstenberg: in the court-yard of whose palace, the Danube takes its rise. I am this moment returned from visiting the spot; the description of which may be comprised in a few words. Some small springs bubbling from the ground, form a basin of clear water, of about thirty feet square: from this basin issues the Danube, which is here only a little brook. And though the two small rivers of Bribach and Brege, uniting below the town, are far more considerable than this stream, which flows into them soon after their junction; yet the latter alone has the honour of being called the source of the Danube. Having gone through the ceremony of striding across the stream, in order to say, that we had *stepped* over the Danube, we soon satisfied our curiosity; the object in itself being by no means extraordinary, but deriving its sole consideration from being the source of so noble a river. Indeed, it was this

circumstance alone that induced us to enter Switzerland by the way of Suabia.

I am, dear Sir,

very affectionately yours,

WILLIAM COXE.

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LETTER 2.

*Arrival in Switzerland--Schaffhausen--Fall of the Rhine.*

Schauffhausen, July 22.

I FEEL great delight in breathing the air of liberty : every person here has apparently the mien of content and satisfaction. The cleanliness of the houses, and of the people, is peculiarly striking ; and I can trace in all their manners, behaviour, and dress, some strong outlines, which distinguish this happy people from the neighbouring nations. Perhaps it may be prejudice and unreasonable partiality ; but I am the more pleased, because their first appearance reminds me of my own countrymen, and I could almost



almost think, for a moment, that I was in England.

Schaffhausen, a tolerably well-built town, situated upon the northern shore of the Rhine, is the capital of the canton, and owes its origin to the interruption of the navigation of that river by the cataract at Lauffen: huts being at first constructed for the convenience of unloading the merchandize from the boats, by degrees increased to a large town. Schaffhausen was formerly an imperial city, and governed by an aristocracy: but it was mortgaged in 1330, by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, to the Dukes of Austria, and was released from its dependency by the Emperor Sigismund when Frederic Duke of Austria was put under the ban of the empire. In 1501, it was admitted a member of the Helvetic confederacy; and is the twelfth canton in rank. Of all the cantons, it is the least in size, being only five leagues in length, and three in breadth: its population is supposed to amount to thirty thousand souls; of which, the capital contains about six thousand.

The whole number of citizens or burgeses (in whom the supreme power ultimately resides) is about sixteen hundred. They are divided into twelve tribes: and from these are elected eighty-

five members, who form the great and little council. To these two councils combined, the administration of affairs is committed: the senate, or little council of twenty-five, being entrusted with the executive power, and the great council, comprising the senate, finally deciding all appeals, and regulating the more important concerns of government.

The revenues of the state are very inconsiderable, as will appear from the salary of the burgo-master, or chief of the republic; which barely amounts to £. 150 *per ann.* The reformation was introduced in 1529: the clergy are paid by the state, but their income is scarcely sufficient for their maintenance; the best living being only about £. 100, and the worst £. 40 *per ann.* The professors of literature also, who are taken from the clergy, are paid by government; and a school is supported at the public expence. Sumptuary laws are in force here, as well as in most parts of Switzerland; and no dancing is allowed, except upon particular occasions. The principal article of exportation is wine; of which a large quantity is made, the country abounding in vineyards: and as the canton furnishes but little corn, it is procured from Suabia in exchange for wine. In the town there  
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are a few manufactures of linen, cotton, and silk.

It will perhaps give you some idea of the security of the Swiss republics, when I inform you, that Schaffhausen, although a frontier town, has no garrison; and that the fortifications are but weak. The citizens mount guard by turns; and the people of the canton being divided into regular companies of militia, which are exercised yearly, are always prepared to act in defence of their country. This canton has some troops in France, Sardinia, and Holland; the only foreign services into which the subjects of the Protestant cantons enlist.

Before I take leave of this town, I must not omit mentioning the bridge over the Rhine; justly admired for the singularity of its architecture. The river is extremely rapid, and had already destroyed several stone bridges of the strongest construction; when a carpenter of Appenzel offered to throw a wooden bridge, of a single arch, across the river, which is near four hundred feet wide. The magistrates, however, required that it should consist of two arches, and that he should for that purpose retain the middle pier of the old bridge. The architect was obliged to obey; but he has contrived to leave it a matter of doubt, whether the bridge derives



any support from the middle pier ; and whether it would not have been equally safe if formed solely of one arch.

It is a wooden structure, and is what the Germans call a *hængewerk*, or hanging bridge ; the sides and top are covered ; the road, which is almost level, is not carried, as usual, over the top of the arch ; but is let into the middle, and there suspended. The pier is not in a right line with the buttresses ; as it forms an obtuse angle pointing down the stream, being eight feet out of the rectilinear direction. The distance of this middle pier from the shore next to the town, is a hundred and seventy-two feet, and from the other side, a hundred and ninety-three ; in all, three hundred and sixty-five feet ; making in appearance two arches of a surprising width, and forming a beautiful perspective when viewed at some distance. A man of the slightest weight feels it almost tremble under him ; yet waggons heavily laden pass without danger. It has been compared to a tight rope, which trembles when struck, but still preserves its firm and equal tension. I went under this bridge to examine its mechanism, and was pleased with the simplicity of the architecture : I was not capable of determining whether it rests upon the middle pier, but many judges affirm that it does not.

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On considering the greatness of the plan, and the boldness of the construction, it is matter of astonishment that the architect was originally a carpenter, without the least tincture of literature, totally ignorant of mathematics, and not versed in the theory of mechanics. The name of this extraordinary man was Ulric Grubenman, a native of Tuffen, a small village in the canton of Appenzel. Possessed of great abilities, and a surprising turn for the practical part of mechanics, he raised himself to great eminence; and may justly be considered as one of the most ingenious architects of the present century. The bridge was finished in less than three years, and cost ninety thousand florins \*.

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\* About £. 8000 sterling.—Mr. Andræ, in his Letters upon Switzerland, has given two engravings of this bridge, to which he has added a very accurate description of its mechanical construction, communicated by Mr. Jetzler of Schaffhausen. In this description he represents it as consisting of two arches, and resting upon the middle pier. Several persons well skilled in architecture, maintained a contrary opinion; and in the former editions I was induced to adopt it, from the following reasons. The architect himself constantly maintained, that the bridge was not supported by the pier; his nephew, who was employed in its construction, confirmed the same assertion; and as, at first, it did not even touch the pier, it must therefore, at that time, have been considered as forming but one arch. I must, however, candidly own, that  
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This morning we rode about a league, to the Fall of the Rhine at Lauffen. Our route lay over the hills which form the banks of the river: the environs are picturesque and agreeable; the river beautifully winding through the vale. Upon our arrival at Lauffen, a small village in the canton of Zurich, we dismounted, and ad-

in my subsequent visits to Schaffhausen in 1785 and 1786, I had reason to change my opinion. At those periods the bridge was supported on piles, in order to undergo a thorough repair. Mr. Spengler, a native of the town, and lately returned from Russia, where he had passed many years in the capacity of an architect, fortunately discovered, that much ill-seasoned wood having been employed in its construction, many of the timbers were absolutely decayed; and that one side had greatly swerved from its original direction. This ingenious artist, after having expatiated on the simplicity and boldness of the design, informed me, that the bridge undoubtedly consists of two arches; and that although Grubenmann, of whose abilities he spoke with deserved encomium, affected to place the timbers in such a manner as to resemble but one arch, and always asserted that it was not supported by the pier; yet that the whole fabric would undoubtedly have fallen, if that pier had been taken away. He obligingly shewed me his plan for repairing the bridge, and for strengthening it by means of additional timbers, in order to render it able to support its own weight, when the piles should be removed.

Vid. *Briefe aus der Schweiz nach Hannover geschrieben*. Zurich, 1776.

This bridge was destroyed by the French in 1799, when they were driven from Schaffhausen by the Austrians.

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vancing to the edge of the precipice which overhangs the Rhine, looked down perpendicularly upon the cataract, and saw the river tumbling over the sides of the rock with amazing violence and precipitation. From hence we descended till we were somewhat below the upper bed of the river, and stood close to the fall; so that I could almost have touched it with my hand. A scaffolding is erected in the very spray of this tremendous cataract, and upon the most sublime point of view: the sea of foam rushing down; the continual cloud of spray scattered to a great distance, and to a considerable height; in short, the magnificence of the whole scenery far surpassed my most sanguine expectations, and exceeds all description. Within about an hundred feet of the scaffolding, two crags rise in the middle of the fall: the nearest is perforated by the continual action of the river, and the water forces itself through in an oblique direction, with inexpressible fury, and an hollow sound. Having contemplated the awful sublimity of this wonderful landscape, we descended, and crossed the river, which was extremely agitated.

Hitherto I had only viewed the cataract obliquely; but here it opened by degrees, and displayed another picture, which I enjoyed at my leisure, as I sat down upon the opposite bank.

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The most striking objects were, the castle of Lauffen, erected upon the very edge of the precipice, and projecting over the river; near it, a church and some houses; a clump of cottages close to the fall; in the back ground, rocks, planted with vines, or tufted with hanging woods; a beautiful little hamlet upon the summit, skirted with trees; the great body of water that seemed to rush out from the bottom of the rocks; the two crags boldly advancing their heads in the midst of the fall, and in the very point of its steepest descent, their tops feathered with shrubs, and dividing the cataract into three principal branches. The colour of the Rhine is extremely beautiful, being of a clear sea-green, and I remarked the fine effect of the tints, when blended with the white foam in its descent. There is a pleasing view from an iron foundery close to the river, which is dammed up, in order to prevent its carrying away the works and neighbouring cottages: by means of this dam a small portion of the river is diverted, turns a mill, and forms a little silver current, gliding down the bare rock, and detached from the main cataract. Below the fall the river widens considerably into a more ample basin; at the fall, the breadth seemed to be about three hundred feet. With respect to its  
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perpendicular height, travellers differ: those who are given to exaggeration reckon it a hundred feet; but I should imagine about fifty or sixty feet will be nearer the truth. I stood for some time upon the brink of the cataract, beheld with admiration, and listened in silence; then crossed the river; remounted my horse; and returned to Schaffhausen.

Some writers have asserted that the Rhine precipitates itself in one sheet of water, and, as I before observed, from a perpendicular height of a hundred feet. In former ages this might be the fact; as it is probable that the space between the banks was once a level rock, and considerably higher, and that the river has insensibly undermined those parts, on which it broke with the utmost violence: for, within the memory of several inhabitants of this town, a large rock has given way, that has greatly altered the view. Indeed I am convinced that the perpendicular height of the fall diminishes every year, by the continual friction of so large and rapid a body of water, and have no doubt but that the two crags, which now rise in the midst of the river, will in time be undermined and carried away. The Rhine, for some way before the fall, even near the bridge, dashes upon a rocky bottom, and renders all navigation impossible.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 3.

*Isle of Reichenau—Constance—Genevan Establishment—Isle of Meinau—Lake of Constance.*

Constance, July 24.

**Y**ESTERDAY morning we quitted Schaffhausen, and crossed the Rhine at Dieffenhoffen, a small town in Thurgau; a country dependent upon the eight antient cantons: from thence to Stein the road lay by the side of that river. Stein is an independent town under the protection of Zurich, but governed by its own laws and magistrates. At this place we took a boat to carry us to Constance. A little above Stein the river widens considerably, and forms the inferior lake of Constance, or the *Zeller See*; which is divided into two branches: from Stein to Constance is about sixteen miles, and from the latter to Zell, its greatest breadth, about ten.

A fine breeze soon carried us to the island of Reichenau, which belongs to the bishop of Constance: It is about three miles long, and one broad; contains about sixteen hundred inhabitants, all Catholics, three parishes, one village, and



and a rich abbey of Benedictines, of which the biſhop of Conſtance is abbot. The ſuperior was exceedingly civil, and ſhewed us all the relics and curioſities of the convent : among the latter was a curious tooth of Charles Le Gros. That monarch, who was emperor and king of France, and who poſſeſſed dominions as extenſive as thoſe of Charlemagne, lived to want the common neceſſaries of life, and to depend for his ſubſiſtence upon the charity of an archbiſhop of Mentz. He was publicly depoſed in 887, at a meeting of the principal French, German, and Italian barons, whom he himſelf had ſummoned : after having languiſhed a year, in extreme want and miſery, he died at a ſmall village near Mentz, in Germany, and his remains were conveyed to this convent. The next remarkable curioſity, was an emerald, as it is called, of an extraordinary ſize, which, according to the annals of the convent, was a preſent from Charlemagne. Take its dimensions, and then judge whether it can be an emerald : it has four unequal ſides ; the longeſt is near two feet, and the broadest about nine inches ; it is one inch thick, and weighs about twenty-nine pounds. The ſuperior valued it at £. 4500; but if it is, as I conjecture, nothing more than a transparent green *ſpath-fluor*, its value will be reduced to a few ſhillings.

ings. Upon our return to the inn, where we dined, we found a present from the superior, more valuable to us than all the relics and curiosities of his convent; two bottles of excellent wine, the growth of the island, which is almost a continued vineyard.

In the evening we arrived at Constance; the situation of which upon the Rhine, between the two lakes, is most delightful. I was much affected with the solitary appearance of a town once so flourishing in commerce, and so celebrated in the annals of history. A dead stillness reigns throughout; grass grows in the principal streets; in a word, it wears the melancholy aspect of being almost totally deserted, and scarcely contains three thousand inhabitants. This city has endured a sad reverse of fortune: it was formerly in alliance with Zurich and Basle, and, supported by their assistance, expelled the bishop, and embraced the reformation. But the protestant cantons being worsted in 1351; and the league of Smalcade, of which Constance was a member, being defeated by Charles V. the town was obliged to submit to the emperor, and re-admit the Catholic religion. From this period it lost its independence, and being neglected by the house of Austria, fell by degrees into its present state; exhibiting to some of the  
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neighbouring Swiss cantons, an instructive contrast, which must sensibly endear to them their own invaluable happiness, in the commerce and liberties which they enjoy.

We paid a visit to the chamber where the council of Constance was held in 1415, and had the honour of sitting in the two chairs, in which sat pope John XXIII. \*, and the emperor Sigismund; if any honour can be derived from a turbulent ecclesiastic, and a perjured sovereign. By a sentence of this council, the celebrated reformer John Hufs, trusting to the protection of the emperor, who violated his word, was burnt as an heretic. The house is still shewn where he was seized; upon the walls is his head, carved in stone, but now almost defaced; with an inscription under it in German. Jerome of Prague, his disciple, had the weakness to recant before the same council; but this weakness was amply compensated by the greatness of soul with which he again retracted this recantation, and by the calm and intrepid magnanimity which he displayed in his last moments at the stake. From the top of the cathedral we had a superb view of the town, and of the two lakes; with

\* He was deposed in this council.



the rugged Alps of Tyrol and Appenzel, their tops covered with perpetual snow.

Constance may again become a commercial town, through the permission granted by the emperor, to the emigrants from Geneva, of settling and carrying on their trade and manufactures, with very considerable privileges. Messrs. Roman and Meilly, watchmakers of Geneva, were the first persons, whom the troubles of their native republic drove to Constance. They received from the emperor the following immunities for themselves and countrymen.

The right of purchasing or building houses; free exercise of religion, entirely independent of the Catholic clergy; the power of erecting a tribunal for the purpose of deciding all affairs relative to their manufactures and commerce; exemption from serving in the militia and quartering soldiers, from all contributions during the space of twenty years, from duties on their tools and utensils; the standard of the gold and silver employed in their manufactures to be invariably fixed. These favourable terms, signed on the 30th of June 1785, attracted so many settlers to Constance, that in my second visit to this place, on the 25th of October 1787, the new colony of Genevans consisted of seventy families,

milies, comprising three hundred and fifty persons; among these were fifty-four watch-makers, who had introduced the different branches of manufacture which belong to their trade. Four hundred watches were already finished, and above fourteen hundred more were preparing.

The emperor has also granted to Mr. Macaire the convent of Dominicans lately secularized, towards establishing a manufacture of printed linens and cottons. The refectory is appropriated for the chapel of the new colony.

I did not omit visiting a small dungeon, about eight feet long, six broad, and seven high, in which John Huss was confined, wherein I observed the very stone to which he had been chained. I entered it however with very different sensations from those which I experienced in 1776, when this convent was the asylum of monkish superstition. It is now the seat of trade and industry; and it must suggest a pleasing reflection to a philosophic mind, that a successor of Sigismund, who violated his word, should have consigned to a reformed establishment that very convent in which the Bohemian divine was imprisoned, and from which he was led to the stake, and that the most enlarged



principles of toleration should be manifested in the same spot, where persecution was inculcated by precept and example. It is the triumph of reason and religion over bigotry and intolerance.

I am just returned from a pleasant expedition to the small island of Meinau, in a bay of the superior lake: this island, about a mile in circumference, belongs to the knights of the Teutonic order. The bailiff shewed us the house of the commander, which is prettily situated, and has a fine prospect of the lake, but contains nothing remarkable except the cellars, which are well stocked with wine; an article from which the chief revenue of the commandery arises. Our good friend the bailiff was very free in offering it; and we, not to appear insensible of his civility, were constrained to taste several different sorts, which he successively presented, always praising the last as the oldest and most exquisite. The wine was indeed excellent, the glasses large, and a formidable row of enormous casks still remained untasted; so that, after having duly extolled several specimens, we found it expedient to decline the farther solicitations of our generous host: for, had we performed the whole ceremony, we must have taken up our abode in the castle for the night.

July 25.

We fet sail about two hours ago from Constance. This superior lake, or, as it is sometimes called, the *Boden See*, is about fifteen leagues in length and six in its greatest breadth: it is one of the great boundaries that separate Switzerland from Germany. The borders consist of gently rising hills; on the left hand Suabia, and on the right Thurgau, with a variety of scattered towns, villages, and monasteries: the form of the lake inclines to an oval, and the water is of a greenish hue. I am now writing aboard the vessel, and have been for some time in vain attempting to distinguish (what some travellers have affirmed to be discernible) the waters of the Rhine from those of the lake. The river in its course from the superior lake, being exactly of the same beautiful greenish colour as the inferior lake into which it flows; it is evident that the one can never be distinguished from the other. Probably, upon its first entrance into the superior lake it is troubled, and consequently, for some way, its current may easily be traced: but it purifies by degrees, and becomes an indistinct part of the great body of water.

This lake, like all the other lakes of Switzerland, is considerably deeper in summer than in

winter ; a circumstance owing to the first melting of the snow from the neighbouring mountains : it abounds in fish of various sorts. Yesterday evening, in our expedition to Meinau, there was scarcely a breeze stirring, and the lake was as smooth as chrystal : a brisk gale has now raised a fine curl upon the surface, and the surrounding landscape forms an assemblage of the most beautiful objects. In short, the several views which present themselves are so truly enchanting, as to make me regret every moment that my eyes are called off from the delightful scenes. You will not wonder, therefore, if I am tempted to bid you adieu somewhat abruptly.

Yours, &c.

P. S. The following description of the great trout, which frequents all the Swiss lakes, but more particularly abounds in the lake of Constance, was communicated by Thomas Pennant, Esq. This species of trout is called in this neighbourhood *Illankin*, and by Linnæus, *Salmo Lacustris*. The head is conical, and larger in proportion than that of a salmon. The dorsal fin has twelve rays ; pectoral, fourteen ; ventral and anal, twelve each. The under jaw, in full-grown fish, ends in a blunt hook. The colour,

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as low as the lateral line, of a deep blue, brightening as it approaches the line ; beneath that, of a silvery white ; all the upper part is spotted irregularly with black. This kind grows to the weight of forty or forty-five pounds.

These fishes quit the deeps of the lake in April, and go up the Rhine to deposit their spawn. The inhabitants of the shores form weirs across the river, in which they take them in their passage. They are also caught in nets. The fishery lasts from May to September ; the fishermen avoid taking any on the return, as they are then very lean and quite exhausted. In spring and summer their flesh is of a fine red, and very delicate ; but after they have spawned, it turns white and becomes very indifferent. They feed on fish, worms, and insects ; and are particularly destructive to the graylings. Their great enemy is the pike, which will attack an Illankin four times as large as itself. For a further account, the reader may consult the elegant *Ichthyologie* by Mr. Block, vol. iii. p. 155, who is the first naturalist that has given a satisfactory account of this gigantic species.

## LETTER 4.

*St. Gallen—Canton of Appenzel.*

July 26.

**I** WRITE to you from the midst of the Alps, under the shade of a grove of beeches, while a clear stream of water, flowing at my feet, forms a natural cascade down the rock. I have just made a hearty meal upon some bread and cheese; a most delicious repast, after walking six miles over the mountains of Appenzel.

We this day quitted St. Gallen, and walked to Appenzel. The country is singularly wild and romantic; consisting of a continued series of hills and dales, vallies and mountains, the tops of which are crowned with most luxuriant pastures. I could not have conceived it possible, without having been an eye-witness, that any district within the same compass could have exhibited so numerous a population; the hills and vales being thickly strewed with hamlets, scattered at a small distance from each other. The picturesque mountains, the forests, the currents which we crossed, over bridges resembling those I have observed in some of the best landscapes, added to the beauty of the scenes, and diversified every

every step with the most pleasing objects. After having reposed for a short time in this delightful spot, I cannot employ myself more to my satisfaction than by continuing my journal.

In my last letter I took my leave of you upon the lake of Constance: we landed at Roshach, a small burgh in the dominions of the abbot of St. Gallen, agreeably situated in the midst of a bay at the edge of the lake, and at the bottom of a rising hill, richly covered with wood and pasturages. From Roshach we went to St. Gallen, the whole territory whereof does not exceed a mile and a half in circumference; and including the town contains near eight thousand inhabitants. Every thing was alive; all persons wore the appearance of industry and activity; exhibiting a striking opposition to Constance, which we had just quitted.

The abbot and town of St. Gallen are both allies of the Swiss cantons, and each enjoys the privilege of sending deputies to the general diet. The abbot of St. Gallen is titular prince of the German empire, and is chosen by the seventy-two Benedictines, who compose this chapter. He formerly possessed the sovereignty of the town; but the inhabitants shook off his authority, and became independent: the various disputes which, since that period, have arisen  
between



between the two rival parties, have been compromised by the interposition of the Swiss cantons. The town is entirely Protestant, and its government aristo-democratical: the subjects of the abbot (whose territory is very extensive) are mostly Catholics. It is remarkable, that the abbey in which the prince resides, is situated close to the town, and in the midst of its territory; as the town is also entirely surrounded by the possessions of the prince.

The town owes its flourishing state to the uncommon industry of the inhabitants, and to a very extensive commerce, arising chiefly from manufactures of linen, muslin, and embroidery. In a place so entirely commercial, I was astonished to find the arts and sciences cultivated, and literature in high esteem. In the library there are thirteen volumes in folio, containing manuscript letters of the first German and Swiss reformers. Luther ends a letter to Melancthon as follows:

*Pestis eram vivus, mariens ero mors tua, Papa.*

These letters would probably throw much light on the history of the reformation.

The library belonging to the abbey is very numerous and well arranged; and, among a number of monkish manuscripts, contains several of the classic writers, which engaged my chief attention.

attention. To this library we owe Petronius Arbiter, Silius Italicus, Valerius Flaccus, and Quintilian, copies of which were found in 1413: it was formerly very rich in curious manuscripts: but several being borrowed, during the council of Constance, by the cardinals and bishops, were never returned.

The transition from the abbot of St. Gallen to the canton of Appenzel will not appear abrupt, as Appenzel once belonged to the abbot: the inhabitants, however, being loaded with exorbitant and oppressive taxes, revolted in 1400, and maintained their independence with the desperate courage of a spirited people, who fight for their liberties. In 1452 they entered into a perpetual alliance with some of the neighbouring Swiss republics, and in 1513 were admitted into the Helvetic confederacy: they hold the last rank among the thirteen cantons.

Before the reformation the whole canton was under one government; but since that period, part of the inhabitants having embraced the Protestant religion, and the other part continuing Catholics, violent disputes were kindled between them; which, after much contest, were at length compromised. By an agreement in 1597, the canton was divided into two portions; *Rhodes Exterior*, and *Rhodes Interior*:

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it was stipulated, that the former should be appropriated to the Protestants, and the latter to the Catholics. Accordingly the two parties separated, and formed two republics; their government, police, and finances, being totally independent of each other. Each district sends a deputy to the general diet: the whole canton, however, has but one vote, and loses its suffrage if the two parties are not unanimous. In both divisions the sovereign power is vested in the people at large; every male, who is past sixteen, having a vote in their general assembly, held yearly for the creation of their magistrates and the purposes of legislation, and each voter is obliged to appear armed on that particular occasion. The Landamman is the first magistrate: in each district there are two, who administer the office alternately, and are confirmed yearly. They have each a council, which possesses jurisdiction in civil and criminal causes, has the care of the police, the management of the finances, and the general administration of affairs. The Landamman regent presides; and the other, during the year in which he is out of office, is banneret or chief of the militia.

The *Rhodes Exterior* is much larger, and more peopled in proportion, than the *Interior*; and the Protestants are in general more commercial



mercial and industrious than the Catholics. The Protestants are supposed to amount to thirty-seven thousand; the Catholics to twelve thousand: an extraordinary number in so small a canton, entirely mountainous, and of which a great part consists of barren and inaccessible rocks. But the industry of the inhabitants amply compensates for any disadvantages of soil: for, the people are frugal and laborious; their property is secured, and they are exempted from all burdensome and arbitrary taxes. These circumstances, joined to the right of partaking of the legislation, and of electing their magistrates, inspire them with such animated sentiments of their own importance and independence, as excite the most active and vigorous industry, and those necessities, to which this industry is not sufficient, are abundantly supplied by their neighbours, in exchange for manufactures and other articles of domestic commerce. The chief part of the habitable country consists of rich pastures, and of course their principal exports are cattle and hides, together with cheese and butter. Their manufactures are coarse callicots and muslins in great quantities, which are entirely made in the houses of the inhabitants. The cotton is spun with the common wheel. The web is bleached at home;

and afterwards sent to be printed in the neighbourhood of Neuchatel. The greatest bleachery I saw in the Alps was near Appenzel, which extended over three or four acres of ground. Part of the river Sitler is diverted to turn the mill, which is of the simplest construction. A large wheel on the outside works a long cylinder within; on which are fixed a number of cogs to raise the hammers which beat the webs. In the same place are the boilers and other conveniences for the business.

The only mills for spinning the cottons by water which I observed in Switzerland, were near Neuchatel and Geneva; but greatly inferior in size and ingenuity of machinery to those of England.

The flourishing state of the cotton manufactory has rendered many persons in the Protestant districts easy in their circumstances, and even wealthy; if wealth is estimated from the general state of the natives, and not from the comparative view of distant and greater opulence in large commercial cities. The villages of Trogen and Undevil announce, by their superior neatness, the well-being of their inhabitants.

This canton contains no enclosed towns, but only two or three open burghs, of which Appenzel is the largest in the Catholic, Trogen, Undevil,

Undevil, and Herifau, in the Protestant district, and a few villages : indeed the whole country, except amongst the barren rocks, is almost a continued village, being thickly covered with excellent cottages. Each cottage has its little territory, or a field or two of fine pasture ground, which are frequently skirted with trees. The mountains are for the most part beautifully wooded ; and the canton is supplied with water in such exuberance, that we could hardly walk two hundred paces without seeing a spring bubble from the ground, or a torrent rush down the sides of a rock.

In our way to Appenzel, we entered several houses, which are all built of wood ; neatness and convenience being the principal object of the owners : such a remarkable cleanliness prevailed throughout, as afforded a most striking proof of the general attention which the people pay to that essential article. A continued chain of these cultivated mountains, richly clothed with wood, and thickly studded with hamlets, which appear to have been placed by the genius of taste in the very spots where they would form the most striking effect, exhibit a series of landscapes inexpressibly pleasing : it seemed as if they belonged to independent clans ; independent but social, uniting for the great purposes of legislation,



legislation, and for the general preservation of their liberties.

Among the chief part of the inhabitants, the original simplicity of the pastoral life is still preserved; and I saw several venerable figures with long beards, that resembled the pictures of the antient patriarchs. The natives of this canton, in common with the inhabitants of democracies, possess a natural frankness, and peculiar tone of equality, which arise from a consciousness of their own independence. They also display a fund of original humour, and are remarkable for great quickness of repartee, and rude sallies of wit, which render their conversation extremely agreeable and interesting.

In our way to Appenzel we passed through Tuffen, the birth-place of Ulric Grubenman, whom I mentioned in a former letter \*: he has been dead some years: but his abilities and his skill in practical architecture are, if I may use the expression, hereditary in his family. We inquired for one of the same name, who was either his brother or his nephew, whom we found at the alehouse. He is a heavy, coarse-looking man, dressed like a common peasant, has a quick and penetrating eye, and great readiness of conversation. We told him that we were English-

\* See page 9.

men, who were making the tour of Switzerland ; and that we could not pass through Tuffen without desiring to see a man who was so much celebrated for his skill in architecture. He struck his breast, and replied in German, “ Here you “ see but a boor.” Upon our talking with him about the bridge of Schaffhausen, in the building of which he was employed, he assured us, that it does not rest upon the middle pier, but is in reality a single arch. Near Appenzel we observed an old man with venerable white hair hanging over his shoulders, who looked like a substantial farmer : he inquired with a tone of authority, but with perfect civility, who we were, and upon our asking the same question respecting himself, our guide informed us, that he was the *Landamman*, or chief of the republic. Happy people, the nature of whose country, and the constitution of whose government both equally oppose the strongest barriers against the introduction of luxury !

Doctor Girtanner, of St. Gallen, found in great abundance, on the top of the Appenzel mountains, the *Draba Pyrenaica* of Linnæus, not mentioned by Haller in his catalogue of the Swiss plants.

Yours, &c.

Appenzel, July 27.

## LETTER 5.

*Valley of the Rhine—The Lake and Town of  
Wallenstadt.*

Salets, July 27.

WE are this moment arrived at the village of Salets ; where we propose passing the night : while supper is preparing, I will continue my journal. We could procure but three horses at Appenzel, and as one of them was appropriated to the baggage, I preferred walking. After having traversed a league in the canton, over a continued range of mountains, enriched with beautiful meadows, and dotted with cottages, I reached its boundary ; here the scene suddenly changed into a wild forest of firs and pines, without the least appearance of any habitation. The road is scarcely more than three feet broad ; and is either paved with large uneven pieces of rock, or formed of thick stakes laid closely together : but as the ground is in many parts softer than in others, these stakes in some places sink deeper, and form a succession of uneven steps. The mountain by which we descended into the plain, is very steep ; which circumstance, added to the unevenness of the stakes,



Itakes, makes the ascent and descent exceedingly difficult for horses. Those who are pleased with an uniform view, may continue in the plain; while others, who delight in the grand and the sublime, and are struck with the wantonness of wild, uncultivated nature, will prefer this road to the smoothest turnpike in Great Britain.

I walked slowly on, without envying my companions on horseback: for I could sit down upon an inviting spot, climb to the edge of a precipice, or trace a torrent by its fount. I descended at length into the *Rheinthal*, or Valley of the Rhine; the mountains of Tyrol, which yielded neither in height or in cragginess to those of Appenzel, rising before me. And here I found a remarkable difference: for although the ascending and descending was a work of some labour; yet the variety of the scenes had given me spirits, and I was not sensible of the least fatigue. But in the plain, notwithstanding the scenery was still beautiful and picturesque, I saw at once the whole way stretching before me, and had no room for fresh expectations: I was not therefore displeased when I arrived at Oberriede, after a walk of about twelve miles, my coat slung upon my shoulder like a peripatetic by profession. Here we procured a narrow cart;

in which, the roads being rough and stony, you will readily believe we were not much at our ease. The evening however being fine, and the moon exceedingly bright, our journey was not altogether disagreeable; as it led us through a delightful country abounding in vines, fruit-trees, flax, and pasturage.

The Rheinthal is a bailliage belonging to Appenzel and the eight antient cantons, which alternately appoint a bailif. The people are of both religions, but the Protestants are the most numerous.

Wallenstadt, July 28.

We quitted Salets this morning, in the same cart in which we arrived, and it would have afforded matter of some speculation, to observe how we contrived to arrange ourselves, our servants, a large Newfoundland dog, and the baggage, in so narrow a compass: indeed we were so wedged in, that, after we had once fixed ourselves in our several places, it was almost impossible to stir. The day was sultry, the road bad, and the cart went barely at the rate of three miles an hour; but the country still continued so picturesque and mountainous, and our attention was so entirely engaged with the perpetual variety of objects presented to our view,

as

as to make us forget the inconveniences of our equipage, and the excessive heat of the weather. From Trivabach, a small village upon the Rhine, we walked to Sargans, the capital of a bailliage of the same name, belonging to the eight antient cantons.

Let me here remark, that in Switzerland there are two sorts of bailliages: the one consisting of certain districts, into which all the aristocratical cantons are divided; and over these a particular officer, called a *bailif*, is appointed by government, to which he is accountable for his administration: the other sort are territories belonging to two or more of them, who by turns appoint a bailif. This officer, when not restrained by the peculiar privilege of certain districts, has the care of the police, jurisdiction in civil and criminal causes with some limitations; and enjoys a stated revenue arising in different places from various duties and taxes. In case of exaction or mal-administration, an appeal always lies from the bailif to the cantons, to which the bailliage belongs: and the place, the time, and the members who receive the appeal, are regulated with the utmost exactness. With respect to this of Sargans, and the others belonging to the eight antient cantons conjointly;



at the conclusion of the general diet held annually at Frauenfeld in Thurgau, the deputies of these cantons resolve themselves into a Syndicate, examine the accounts of the public revenues as delivered by the bailifs of the respective districts, and receive and judge all appeals; in some cases finally; but in the more important causes an appeal lies from this assembly to the superior tribunal of each canton.

We arrived late at Wallenstadt, a town incorporated into the bailliage of Sargans, but enjoying several distinct privileges: it derives its existence from the passage of the merchandise transported from Germany through the Grisons to Italy. This communication occasions the frequent resort of Italian merchants; and that language is understood by many of the inhabitants. Our landlord speaks Italian, and has been very accurate in his answers to my questions relating to the number of inhabitants, the government of the town, its dependence upon the bailif, and its privileges. Nor is this a matter of wonder: for the innkeepers in Switzerland are mostly *burghers*, and are frequently members of the sovereign council; and, from the very nature of their governments, the Swiss in general are well informed of their particular

constitutions. I have also held a long conversation with a native of Glarus, who has furnished me with much information in relation to that canton; which we purpose visiting to-morrow.

Wesen, July 29.

The lake of Wallenstadt, about twelve miles in length, and two in breadth, is entirely bounded by high mountains, except to the east and west. From this situation, a breeze generally blows from those two quarters, beginning at break of day, and continuing for some hours; then changes from west to east till sun-set: this breeze is very convenient for the transportation of the merchandise. Sometimes however a violent north-wind rushes down from the mountains, and renders the navigation dangerous. We were assured by the inhabitants, and by the watermen who rowed us from Wallenstadt to this place, that the breeze abovementioned was generally constant: but we cannot attest it from our own experience; as we set out this morning about eight, and the wind was directly contrary the whole way, blowing from west to east. The weather, it is true, was heavy, overcast, and rainy, which might cause perhaps this occasional variation.

The scenery of the lake is uncommonly wild and picturesque, and affords a perpetual variety of beautiful and romantic scenes. On the side of Glarus, the mountains which form its borders, are chiefly cultivated; enriched with wood or fine meadows; and studded with cottages, churches, and small villages; the Alps of Glarus rising behind, their tops covered with snow. On the other side, for the most part, the rocks are grotesque, craggy, inaccessible, and perpendicular: but here and there a few cultivated necks of land are formed at the very edge of the lake, and at the bottom of these very rocks; exhibiting a beautiful contrast to the barrenness above and around them. Numberless waterfalls, occasioned by the melting of the snows, fall down the sides of the mountains from a very considerable height, and with an almost inconceivable variety; some seeming to glide gently in circular directions; others forming vast torrents, and rushing into the lake with noise and violence: all changing their form and their position as we approached or receded from them. The lake is exceedingly clear, deep, and cold, and, as we were informed, is never frozen.

There



There is nothing remarkable in this place; being a small village situated almost upon the point where the Mat issues from the lake of Wallenstadt: that little river is joined by the Linth, and both united fall, under the name of Limmat, into the lake of Zurich.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER 6.

### *The Canton of Glarus.*

Glarus, July 29.

THE canton of Glarus was formerly subject to the abbess of the convent of Seckingen in Suabia: the people however enjoyed very considerable privileges and a democratical form of government, under the administration of a mayor, appointed by the abbess, but chosen among the inhabitants. Towards the latter end of the thirteenth century, the emperor Rodolph I. obtained the exclusive administration of justice; and not long afterwards his son Albert, having purchased the mayoralty, which had gradually become hereditary, re-united in his person the whole

whole civil and judicial authority. Albert, and his immediate descendants the dukes of Austria, oppressed the people, and ruled over them with an absolute sway. In 1350, Schweitz, assisted by Zurich, Lucerne, Uri, and Underwalden, expelled the Austrians from the canton of Glarus, and re-established the democracy. Glarus then entered into a perpetual alliance with its deliverers, and was received into the Helvetic confederacy with some restrictions, which were not abolished until 1450. At that time it was the sixth canton, but is now the last in rank of the eight *antient* cantons, as they are called; being so distinguished, because, from the accession of Zug and Bern in 1352, more than a century elapsed before a new member was admitted. These *antient* cantons have also several privileges superior to the five others; the latter having submitted to some particular restrictions, upon their reception into the Helvetic league.

The people of Glarus enjoyed their liberties unmolested till 1388, when the Austrians made an irruption into the canton, with a force sufficient, as they arrogantly thought, totally to subdue it; pillaging the country, and massacring the inhabitants. It was then that three hundred and fifty troops of Glarus, assisted by thirty Switzers, resisted the whole strength of the Austrian

Austrian army: the former were posted advantageously upon the mountains, and the latter, to the number of fifteen thousand, at a village called Næfels. In this situation the Austrians began the attack; but were soon compelled to retreat with great precipitation, by a shower of stones poured upon them from the heights: in this moment of confusion, the inhabitants rushed down upon the enemy with redoubled fury, they broke their ranks, and, after an immense slaughter, forced the remainder to retire from the canton. Such surprising victories, gained by a handful of men against an enemy so much superior in number (instances of which are by no means rare in the history of Switzerland) render the wonderful combats of Marathon and Plataea, when the Greeks repulsed the numerous hosts of the whole Persian empire, perfectly credible. The same love of independence, the same dread of slavery, and the same attachment to their country, animated the respective nations to the same deeds of heroism: in both instances victory was followed by the same glorious consequences; for the Swiss, as well as the Greeks, owe the rise and preservation of their liberties to that magnanimous and determined valour, which prefers death to life under the servile domination of an arbitrary despot. The people still  
celebrate



celebrate the anniversary of this victory, which insured their independence, and I saw near the village of Næfels several stones, with no other inscription than 1388: an inscription which no more requires explanation, to an inhabitant of the canton, than the glorious æra of 1688, to an Englishman.

In the sixteenth century, the reformation was introduced into this canton, but not exclusively: both religions are tolerated, and the two sects live together in the greatest harmony; an union the more remarkable, when we consider the fatal quarrels that have been kindled in Switzerland on account of religious tenets, and that in Appenzel the division between the two sects is distinctly marked by their inhabiting different districts, and living under separate governments. In several parts of this canton, the Protestants and Catholics successively perform service in the same church; and all the offices of state are amicably administered by the two parties. During the present and preceding century, the Protestants have increased considerably in number; and their industry, in every branch of commerce, is greatly superior: an evident proof how much the tenets of the Roman Catholic church fetter the genius, and depress the powers of exertion.

The

The government is entirely democratical : every person at the age of sixteen has a vote in the *Landsgemeind*, or general assembly, which is annually held in an open plain. This assembly ratifies new laws, lays contributions, enters into alliances, declares war, and makes peace. The *Landamman* is the chief of the republic, and is chosen alternately from the two sects ; with this difference, that the *Protestant* remains three years in office, the *Catholic* only two. The manner of election is as follows : five candidates chosen by the people draw lots for the charge. The other great officers of state, and the bailifs, are taken also by lot from a certain number of candidates proposed by the people. The executive power is vested in the council of regency, composed of forty-eight Protestants, and fifteen Catholics : each sect has its particular court of justice ; and it is necessary, that in all law-suits between two persons of different religions, the person having the casting voice among the five or nine judges, who are to determine the cause, should be of the same religion as the defendant.

Cattle, cheese, and butter, constitute the principal commerce of the canton. The cattle are fed in summer upon the Alps : it is computed, that ten thousand head of large cattle, and four thousand sheep, are pastured during  
that

that season upon the mountains belonging to the canton. The inhabitants also manufacture linen and muslins.

Among the exports a considerable article is slate; with which the canton abounds. The principal quarry is in the valley of Sernft, where large slates are dug up that serve for tables. These quarries, as I am informed by Mr. David Pennant, once furnished Great Britain with slates for writing, or accomptants' slates; but this trade is entirely lost. Of late they have been prepared from the great slate quarries in Caernarvonshire, the property of Lord Penryn; and with such success, as bids fair to extend this article of commerce over most part of Europe.

July 30.

I am just returned to Glarus, after having made an excursion towards the extremity of the canton: it is entirely enclosed by the Alps, except towards the north; and there is no other entrance but through this opening, which lies between the lake of Wallenstadt and the mountains separating this canton from that of Schweitz. Passengers indeed may in summer traverse these Alps to the Grisons on one side, and to Uri on the other: but these paths are in winter absolutely



lutely impracticable. At the entrance above-mentioned, the canton reaches, from the banks of the Linth to the farthest extremity of its Alps, about thirty miles ; forming a valley, which becomes narrower as you advance, and is scarcely more than a musket-shot in breadth at the burgh of Glarus. It afterwards opens by degrees, and about a league from the last-mentioned burgh, is divided by the Freyberg mountains : at the point of this division the two rivers, Linth and Sernft, unite.

We continued through the largest of these vallies, which, though very narrow, is exceedingly populous. You have been at Matlock in Derbyshire, and I remember your admiration of its beautiful and romantic situation : the scenery of this valley is of the same cast, but infinitely more picturesque, more wild, more varied, and more sublime. The Linth is much broader and more rapid than the Derwent, and the hillocks of the Peak are mere mole-hills to the alps of Glarus. These stupendous chains of rocks are absolutely perpendicular, approach one another so near and are so high, that the sun may be said to set, even in summer, at four in the afternoon. On each side are numbers of those water-falls we so much admired during our passage over the lake of Wallenstadt ; one in particular near the  
village

village of Ruti, foamed down the steep sides of a mountain, from the midst of a hanging grove of trees. I was so captivated with these enchanting scenes, that I could not help stopping every moment to admire them: our guide, not conceiving it possible, that these delays could be owing to any other cause than the laziness of my horse, never failed to strike the poor beast, and continually awakened me out of my rapturous contemplations; it was some time before I could make him comprehend, that I stopped by choice, and wished to continue my own pace. After having rode about ten miles, we quitted our horses and walked. Near Leugelbach, a considerable rivulet is formed by two streams bursting from the ground at the foot of a mountain, which after a few paces unite, and fall into the Linth: beside these two principal branches, several smaller springs, and numberless little fountains, gush from the rock. The clearness of the streams; their rapidity and murmuring sound; the trees that hang over the point from whence they issue; the rude rocks above; the rich meadows and scattered hamlets; all together form an assemblage of the most lively and pleasing objects that ever composed a beautiful landscape.

I am

I am informed by Mr. David Pennant, that Salmons force their way annually from the sea as high as this river, to deposit their spawn. Their progress is up the Rhine, and out of that noble river up the Aar, and through the lake of Zurich into the Linth; a course of many hundred miles. They are taken in these distant parts in September and October, and about the size of seventeen or twenty pounds weight.

We crossed the Linth several times, which rushes with all the violence of a torrent, and came at length to an amphitheatre of mountains, where the valley ended: on our right-hand a fall more considerable than any we had yet seen, tumbling perpendicularly over a bare rock in a large body of water; the alps on each side crowned with inaccessible forests, and covered with everlasting snow; before us a pyramidical mountain, bare and craggy; and the glaciers of Glarus closing the view. Here the valley, and the habitable part of the canton terminate. We then quitted the plain, and ascending through a wild forest of beech and pines, continued more than an hour mounting a very steep and rugged path, till we came to the Panten-Bruck, a bridge over the cataract that forms the Linth, which is here called the Sand-bach: it roars from the glacier down the steep mountain in one unbroken



fall, and, a little way before its arrival under the bridge, works itself a subterraneous passage through the rock, where it is lost only to appear again with increased violence and precipitation. The bridge is a single arch of stone, of about seventy feet in length, thrown over a precipice of above three hundred feet in depth. It serves as a communication with the upper alps, and is the passage for the cattle which are fed there during the summer months; on the other side some goats came jumping around us, and seemed to welcome us to their dreary habitations. These mountains are covered with a great variety of rare plants, which made me regret, that I had not pursued my botanical studies. As I leaned upon the parapet of the bridge, and looked down into the chasm beneath, my head almost turned giddy with the height. The rock, down which the Sand-bach drives, is composed of slate. After we had continued some time admiring the sublime horror of the scenery, we descended into the valley, and made a hearty meal upon some excellent bread, honey, butter, and milk, which a neighbouring cottage supplied. As the canton almost entirely consists of rich meadows, the milk and butter are delicious, and the honey of these mountainous countries is most exquisite. Nothing delights me so much as the inside of a

Swift

Swiss cottage: all those I have hitherto visited, convey a lively image of cleanliness, ease, and simplicity; and must strongly impress upon the observer a most pleasing conviction of the peasant's happiness.

If I had never seen these little democratical states, I could have formed no idea of the general equality and indistinction that prevails among the inhabitants. All the houses, like those of Appenzel, are built of wood; large, solid, and compact, with great penthouse roofs that hang very low, and extend beyond the area of the foundation. This peculiar structure is of use to keep off the snow; and, from its singularity, accords surprisingly with the beautiful wildness of the country. The houses of the richer inhabitants in the principal burghs, are of the same materials: the only difference consists in their being larger.

The police is well regulated throughout Switzerland, and even in these democratical states liberty does not often degenerate into licentiousness: we may except, perhaps, the day of their general assemblies, when it is impossible to prevent some degree of confusion in a meeting where there is scarcely any distinction of persons; and where every peasant considers himself as equal to the first magistrate.

Our host is an open-hearted, honest Swiss: he brings his pint of wine, sits down to table with us, and chats without the least ceremony. There is a certain forwardness of this kind which is insupportable, when it apparently is the effect of impertinent curiosity, or fawning officiousness; but the present instance of frank familiarity, arising from a mind conscious of its natural equality, and unconstrained by arbitrary distinctions, is highly pleasing; as the simple demeanour of unsophisticated nature is far preferable to the false refinements of artificial manners.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 7.

*The Abbey of Einsidlin—Rapperschwyl.*

Einsidlin, July 31.

WE could not pass through this part of the country, without making a pilgrimage to Einsidlin, and paying our respects to this celebrated shrine: an object of much devotion among the Catholics. Einsidlin, or *Notre Dame des Hermites* is a rich and magnificent abbey of Benedictines



Benedictines in the canton of Schweitz, which owes its celebrity to the miraculous image, as it is called, of the Virgin Mary. The ridiculous tales they relate of the origin and aggrandizement of this abbey, are so many melancholy instances of the credulity of the darker ages: that they are still believed in the present enlightened century, must be attributed to the force of habitual prejudice; and at the same time proves, how difficult it is for the human mind to shake off those superstitious errors, which it has early imbibed under the name of religion.

In the ninth century a certain hermit called Meinrad, was the first who retired to this place, where he built a chapel, and was assassinated by robbers. But shall I tell you, or (what is more to the purpose) will you believe me if I tell you, that this murder was discovered by two crows, who followed the assassins to Zurich, where they were seized and executed? Soon after, the dead body of St. Meinrad of course works miracles; and all the world pilgrimises to his bones. The sanctity of this place being thus established, some one (for whether it were St. Benno or St. Eberhard, or what other saint I cannot precisely determine) constructed another chapel, which he dedicated to the Virgin, and laid the first foundation of the abbey; having bequeathed for that

purpose his whole fortune: and the pious fund was soon considerably augmented by subsequent donations. Shall I tell you also, that in 948, Conrad, bishop of Constance, as he was going to consecrate the chapel, heard a voice from heaven, assuring him, that God himself had consecrated it? Whatever was its origin, and whoever was its founder; crowds of pilgrims resort hither from all quarters to adore the Virgin, and to present their offerings: and it is computed, that upon the most moderate calculation, their number amounts yearly to 100,000. The circumjacent country was formerly a continued forest, which since the erection of the abbey has been gradually converted into rich pastures and beautiful meadows: and this is a miracle which the Virgin, in a certain sense, may be truly said to have performed.

August 1.

I have just been visiting the abbey, the chapel of the Virgin, and her immense treasures. The church of the abbey is a large and magnificent building, but exhibits a remarkable specimen of false taste, being loaded with bad paintings, and superfluous ornaments. In the aisle not far from the entrance, is a small and elegant marble chapel of the Corinthian order: this is the celebrated







S. Allen fec.

L. Smith del.



brated shrine of the Virgin, to which the pilgrims resort. On the outside an angel supports the following inscription :

*Hic est plena remissio peccatorum omnium a culpâ et pœnâ.*

Over the door is a plate of silver with five holes, into which I saw several persons thrusting their fingers, and praying at the same time with great fervour : upon inquiry I found, that the credulous people believed these holes to be the marks of God's fingers. In the inside of this chapel is the image of the Virgin, which vies with the lady of Loretto in *beauty* of countenance ; her face, as well as that of the child she holds in her arms, being black. She is richly apparelled, and changes her garment every week ; her wardrobe consisting of fifty-two different suits.

The riches of the treasury are immense ; containing numberless offerings of gold, silver, and precious stones, arranged in the most ridiculous manner ; skulls and bones sumptuously ornamented ; whole skeletons of saints in masquerade, and ladies with ruffles, fly-caps, and splendid apparel as if dressed for a ball. What a wretched insult upon poor human nature ! I could not help considering them with a mixture of pity and indignation, as the offerings of

ignorance before the shrine of bigotry and superstition. The miracles which the Virgin has wrought in this country are infinite, if we may judge from the numerous figures of ears, eyes, legs, arms, heads, &c. presented by those, who fancied themselves respectively cured in those several members, by the power of this wonder-working image.

I was glad however to find, in the midst of this superstitious trumpery, a good library, which contained some fine editions of the classics.

In this place there is a considerable traffic in rosaries, crosses, and little images; and there are rows of shops, where nothing is to be purchased but these necessary appendages of the Roman Catholic religion: it has all the appearance of a fair. There is also a room in the abbey, where the same kind of merchandise is exposed to sale; and one of the friars attends to receive your money, and very gravely assures you, that the several articles have touched the sacred image. Among other curiosities of this kind, I purchased two ribands, for two pence each, with the following inscription upon them: *Ce Ruban entier, est la longueur; jusqu'au trait est l'épaisseur, de l'image de Notre Dame des Hermites. Il a touché l'image miraculeuse.*

This



This abbey is very rich, and has considerable revenues in the canton of Zurich. The abbot, who is titular prince of the German empire, is elected by sixty Benedictines, that form the chapter.

As I walked to this celebrated convent, I found the whole way furnished with stalls, provided with cakes, whey, and other refreshments for the numerous pilgrims then on their road. I saw several hundreds, in groups of different numbers. Some consisted of a whole parish, attended by their spiritual pastor. More than once, I observed some grievous sinner driven from the flock, and walking at a distance counting his beads, bare-footed and bare-headed, doing full penance for his crimes. I also saw several bevvies of merry damsels, who seemed to enjoy the pilgrimage as much as Welsh lasses relish a wake. They often turned into the little chapels which lay open on the way, and wantonly sprinkled each other with holy water.

This day's journey reminded me of Chaucer's Tales, in which he exactly describes this pilgrimage, in his account of that to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury :

*From every place the pious rambles stray,  
But most to good Einsidlin bend their way;  
There, at the martyr's shrine, a cure they find  
For each sick body, and each love-sick mind.*

Rapperschwyl, August 2.

The evening, yesterday, being fine and cool, I walked from Einsidlin to this place. After we had ascended about three miles, a view of the lake of Zurich, and of the adjacent country, opened upon us at once. The prospect was extensive and beautiful: the solemn stillness of the evening, the calmness of the lake, and the tints of the setting sun, which glowed around the horizon, very much improved its charms. When we arrived at the lake, the moon began to rise; and, throwing its beams across the water, formed another scene, more mild indeed, but not less affecting. We then crossed the bridge of Rapperschwyl, built over the narrowest part of the lake: it measured near 1700 paces. The town is pleasantly situated upon a neck of land or promontory. It formerly threw itself under the protection of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Glarus, with a reserve of all its privileges: but these cantons shamefully oppressing the inhabitants, and encroaching upon their liberties; Zurich and Bern took possession of the town in 1712, and restored its antient immunities. From that period Rapperschwyl has continued under the protection of Zurich, Bern, and Glarus; the latter having preserved its right by its neutrality. By this treaty the town having recovered its former

former prerogatives, the inhabitants, in testimony of their gratitude, placed the following inscription over the gates: *Amicis Tutoribus floret libertas.*

This small republic is governed by a great and little council, consisting of forty-eight members. The town contains two hundred burghers, and about a thousand inhabitants, all Catholics. Its territory is about a league in circumference, and comprehends three parishes.

Yours, &c.

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## LETTER 8.

### *Town and Canton of Zurich.*

Zurich, August 3.

**Y**ESTERDAY we dined luxuriously with the Capuchin friars at Rapperschwyl, who seldom treat their guests in so sumptuous a manner. It was one of their great feast-days; and they regaled us with every variety of fish, with which the lake and the neighbouring rivers abound. The convent stands upon the edge of the water, and commands an agreeable prospect; the



the library is by far the pleasanter apartment, though not the most frequented. The cells of the monks are small, and yet not inconvenient; but cleanliness does not seem to constitute any part of their moral or religious observances. Indeed the very habit of the order is ill calculated for that purpose, as they wear no shirt or stockings, and are clothed in a coarse kind of brown drugget robe, which trails upon the ground. Strange idea of sanctity! as if dirt could be acceptable to the Deity. I reflected with particular satisfaction, that I was not born a member of the Roman Catholic church; as perhaps the commands of a parent, a sudden disappointment, or a momentary fit of enthusiasm, might have sent me to a convent of Capuchins, and have wedded me to dirt and superstition for life.

After dinner we took leave of our hosts, and departed for Zurich by water: the lake is near ten leagues in length, and one in breadth. This body of water is of an oblong form, and not near so large as that of Constance; but the borders are studded more thickly with villages and towns. The adjacent country is finely cultivated and well peopled; and the southern part of the lake appears bounded with the high stupendous mountains of Schweitz and Glarus: the scenery is picturesque, lively, and diversified.

Zurich

Zuric was formerly an imperial city, and obtained from the emperor Frederic II. very considerable privileges; which were acknowledged and augmented by several of his successors. The civil war between the magistrates and the people, in 1335, nearly reduced the city to ruins; but the former being banished, the citizens, in 1337, established a new form of government, which was confirmed by the emperor Louis of Bavaria. The exiles, after several fruitless attempts, were at length re-admitted; but, engaging in a conspiracy against the citizens, were discovered and put to death. In consequence of this execution, the nobles in the neighbourhood took up arms; and Zuric, after having ineffectually applied for assistance to the emperor Charles IV. formed an alliance with Lucerne, Uri, Schwitz, and Underwalden, and was admitted a member of their confederacy. This event happened in the year 1351. The four cantons yielded the pre-eminence to Zuric: a privilege it enjoys at present; being the first canton in rank, and the most considerable in extent both of territory and power next to Bern. In the same year Zuric was assisted by the four cantons against Albert duke of Austria, who besieged the town, and was repulsed with great loss.

Zuric was the first town in Switzerland, that separated from the church of Rome; being converted by the arguments of Zuingle. Of all the reformers (the mild and elegant Melancthon alone excepted) Zuingle seems to merit peculiar esteem: he possessed, to a great degree, that spirit of meekness, moderation, and charity, which are the characteristics of true Christianity; and, amid all the disputes between the Lutherans and the reformed churches, was a constant advocate for peace and reconciliation. He was perfectly free from narrow bigotry which makes no distinction between points of the merest indifference, and objects of the greatest importance; as from overbearing pride, which, while it violently condemns the opinions of others, assumes infallibility with respect to its own. In a word, it was his opinion, that, provided Christians agree in the most essential articles; they ought meekly to bear with any difference upon subjects less uncontrovertible, and which do not influence morals.

Ulric Zuingle, was born Jan. 1, 1484, at Wildhausen, a small village in the Tockenburgh; and, in the twentieth year of his age, was appointed minister of Glarus. Even before the publication of the sale of indulgences by Leo X. which was the more immediate cause of the reform-



reformation, Zuingle exposed at Glarus several superstitions of the church of Rome ; and gained additional credit, by preaching at Einsidlin against vows, pilgrimages, and offerings. After the publication of the sale of indulgences ; while Luther was undermining the fabric of papal authority in Germany, Zuingle was no less successful in Switzerland. By his zeal and intrepidity, and by the irresistible force of truth, he gained so many converts at Zuric (where he had been invited to preach) that in 1524 the magistrates abolished the mass, and other Catholic ceremonies, and introduced the reformed religion. Zuingle had taken such wise precautions, and acted with such extreme moderation, that the disputes between the two sects were carried on with more temper than is usual in religious controversies. The change which had been some time in agitation, was finally determined by a plurality of voices in the sovereign council, and the people readily and cheerfully obeyed the decision of their magistrates. The example of Zuric was soon followed by Bern, Schaffhausen, Basle, with part of Glarus and Appenzel ; the other cantons continuing to adhere to the religion of their ancestors. From this period the two persuasions have been established in Switzerland ; but that harmony,

which

which had hitherto subsisted between the cantons, has been occasionally interrupted. In 1531, religious disputes broke out with so much violence and animosity, as to occasion a civil war; in which the Protestants were defeated, and Zuingli lost his life, in the forty-eighth year of his age, at the battle of Cappel \*. Since that period two other religious wars have been kindled; one in 1656, in which the Catholics gained the advantage; and the other in 1712, when the Protestants proved victorious. The peace of Arau, which terminated these unhappy disputes, has, it is to be hoped, finally composed all religious animosities. By that treaty, which may be considered as a code of toleration among the Swiss; the treatment of the Protestants and Catholics in the common bailliages, is regulated. The first article stipulates, that in all the provinces, which are subject to cantons of different religion, there shall be a perfect equality between

\* It has been urged against Zuingli, as a proof of his persecuting principles, that he was personally engaged in this war against the Catholics. To this it may be answered, That he had used every argument in his power to reconcile the contending parties; that he even openly arraigned the impatient and turbulent zeal of his fellow-citizens; that he acted in obedience to one of the fundamental laws of the republic; and that he accompanied the army by the express command of the magistrates.

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the two sects, and that they shall both enjoy the same privileges: to which is added an express prohibition to each party, not to use any terms of raillery or contempt, in speaking of their respective modes of worship.

The canton of Zuric abounds in corn, wine, and excellent pasture. The proportion of grain to the other productions of the earth, will appear from the following calculation. There are 217,424\* acres in tillage, 14,466 in vines, 94,553 in meadows, 42,549 in pasturage, and 103,772 in forest.

As sufficient corn is not produced for the interior consumption, the deficiency is chiefly supplied from Suabia; and, to prevent a scarcity of this material article, a public granary is maintained at the expence of government. The grain is retailed at the common price; but, in seasons of scarcity, is sold considerably cheaper than it can be purchased at the market. The good effects of this establishment appeared at the dearth in 1771; when, on account of the dearth of corn, a pound of bread was sold for ten pence, the same quantity was delivered by government for four pence. The wine made in the canton forms an inconsiderable object of

\* Of 36,000 square feet each.



foreign commerce ; the greatest part being consumed in the country. In 1779 were exported 10,029 casks, each containing 180 bottles ; in 1781, 24,568, and in 1782, 11,354.

The canton contained, in 1784, 174,572 souls, including 10,500 in the capital. This large population, in proportion to the size of the canton, is owing to the trade of Zurich ; as at least two-thirds of the inhabitants derive their livelihood by spinning thread and filk, and making linen for the manufactures of the town.

The sovereign power resides exclusively in the burgeses of the town, consisting of about two thousand.

Here I cannot but remark, that a narrow spirit of policy reigns throughout most of the states in Switzerland ; as they seldom confer the burghership. This rule, however, in some of the republics, is less scrupulously observed than in others ; but in Zurich a new citizen has not been admitted during these last hundred and fifty years.

It is curious to trace the restrictions which have been gradually laid on granting the burghership. On the 26th of May, 1540, the Sovereign Council issued a decree, importing, that whosoever was desirous of becoming a citizen,

citizen, should be obliged to produce a certificate of good behaviour, properly witnessed and signed, and bearing the seal of the magistrates of the place in which he formerly resided; and should, before he was enrolled among the burghers, pay ten florins, near £. 1, if a native of Switzerland, and double that sum if a stranger. An inhabitant of the town or canton was taxed only at three florins for his admission; and all artists and persons of learning, necessary or useful to the state, were to be received gratis. In 1549, it was enacted, that the burghership should be refused to all who were not possessed of considerable riches, or who did not introduce new arts and trades. This decree was repeatedly confirmed; and, in 1593, it was added, that a new citizen should not be entitled to a share in the government but on the following conditions: If an inhabitant of the canton, he must have resided in the town during ten years; if a native of Switzerland, twenty; if a foreigner, forty; and he must build or purchase a house within the walls of Zuric: this last article was repealed in 1612. In 1597, the reception of new citizens was suspended for the first time, but only for two years; and in 1610, the admission-money was augmented.

In the commencement of the 17th century, government refused to receive into the Sovereign Council the noble families of Orel, Peffaluzz, and Muralt, which, in 1555 and 1557, had quitted Italy and settled at Zurich: these families, partly on account of having embraced the reformed religion, and partly as persons of capacity and industry, had been received into the burghership, but rendered incapable of enjoying a share in the administration of affairs. This exclusion, again confirmed in 1592, was revoked in 1673, in favour only of the family of Muralt, which exception was obtained by considerable largesses. In 1674, the family of Orel offered to disburse ten thousand florins towards the expence of repairing the fortifications, on condition of being rendered capable of election into the Sovereign Council: their petition was then refused, but generously granted in 1679, without the smallest equivalent. Finally, on the 7th of January, 1661, the Council determined to make no more burghers; which resolution has been invariably followed.

The burghers, beside the advantage of electing their magistrates, and of aspiring to the administration of affairs, enjoy the



sole \* right of commerce ; all strangers, and even subjects, being excluded from establishing manu-

\* The narrow principle of commercial monopoly, which confined trade to the burghers of Zuric, excited a spirit of disaffection among the subjects, and particularly the populous districts on the borders of the lake, who overlooked the advantages which they enjoyed from a mild and equitable government in this partial grievance. To the effects of this principle may be attributed the feeble conduct of this canton on the aggression of the French. The magistrates foresaw the designs of the French rulers to subjugate Switzerland, and were willing to co-operate with Bern in defence of Helvetic independence ; but their efforts were defeated by the opposition of the borderers of the lake, who instituted committees of reform, and sent deputies to Paris. Hence all the proposals of government to supply the contingent of men for the relief of Bern, were answered by counter-proposals to reform the constitution. At length the supreme council of Zuric, anxious to conciliate their subjects, and apprehensive of the progress of the French arms, made some concessions, which only served as a pretext for new demands. At each order issued by government for a general armament, new privileges were extorted, until the supreme council committed the charge of new-modelling the state to a convention of one hundred persons selected from different ranks. This committee drew up articles of a new constitution, which were ratified by the councils and the whole body of burghers ; and the old magistracy was invested with the feeble authority of a provisional government.

manufactures in the city, or in any part of the canton.

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But even this innovation did not produce the desired effect; for when the magistracy, in conjunction with the convention, attempted to call forth the contingent of the canton, a small and dispirited number obeyed the summons, and only 1500 men, from a canton whose population amounted to 170,000, marched against the French. These troops were dispirited, uncertain how to act, and, distracted by the wavering counsels of Bern, did not take the field; but, on the capitulation of Bern, surrendered, at Friniberg, to a body of French troops: two companies were plundered; but the remainder were permitted to continue their march to their capital, with all the honours of war.

A general panic now spread among the inhabitants of Zurich; reports prevailed, that on one side a corps of French were preparing to invade the canton, and on the other a large body of the subjects in a state of insurrection were marching against the capital. A hasty accommodation was arranged between the two parties; the inhabitants took up arms, and prepared to defend the place.

Fortunately these reports proved to be fallacious; for a negotiation was opened with the insurgents, who had erected themselves into an assembly of the people, with central and provisional committees; and after a few conferences an accommodation was effected. A garrison of 1000 militia was admitted into the town; the provisional government was dissolved; a national assembly convoked;

The burghers of Zuric are divided into thirteen tribes ; one of which is called *Constaffel*, or the tribe of nobles, although at present not absolutely confined to persons of that description : it enjoys the privilege of giving eighteen members to the Sovereign Council, and six to the Senate, whereas each of the other tribes only supply twelve to the former, and six to the latter.

The legislative authority is vested by the burghers in the Sovereign Council of two hundred ; consisting, however, of two hundred and twelve members drawn from the thirteen tribes, and comprising the Senate or Little

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convoked ; the magistrates deposited their authority into the hands of the free and sovereign people ; a new provisional regency was established ; a tree of liberty planted, with the inscription, “ The brethren of the town and country are united ; ” and a deputation, with the peace-offering of the new constitution, was sent to the French generals, to implore the protection of France, and to request that no foreign troops might enter their territories.

The French generals accepted the submission of Zuric, but inundated the canton with troops. Further alterations were made by the provisional government ; and on the 21st of March the national assembly acceded to the new organization of the Helvetic constitution.



Council. This \* Senate, composed of fifty members, including the two burgomasters, has jurisdiction in all causes civil and criminal: in civil cases, when the demand is of a certain importance, an appeal lies to the Council of two hundred: but in criminal affairs, their sentence is final, and, when once passed, there is no reversal or mitigation. An excellent maxim! provided the judges are cautious and circumspect, and the laws mild: for there is no greater encouragement to the commission of crimes, than the frequency of pardons. Such an institution, however, ought necessarily to exclude severity of punishment; and could never be admitted in a state, where by the letter of the law the same punishment is inflicted upon a sheep-stealer as upon a parricide.

It is to be regretted, that in this republic, as in most other states of Switzerland, there is no precise code of criminal law. The Caroline, or code of Charles V. is ostensibly followed; but on account of its obsolete usages and extreme severity, the sentence is ultimately left to the discretion of the magistrates. For notwithstanding

\* Formerly the Senate was separated into two equal divisions, which alternately administered the office during six months; and although these divisions still continue, yet for some time past they have re-united and acted together.

the most perfect integrity, and upright intentions, yet it is hardly possible to suppose, that party, friendship, connections, and family, should not frequently influence the judges and occasion partial proceedings. It would perhaps well become the wisdom of this enlightened and equitable government to form a penal code, and to ascertain, with precision, the punishment for each offence. The example of such a republic would in time be followed by the remaining cantons and states of Switzerland; and posterity would bless the name of Zuric for having occasioned the introduction of more settled principles in the criminal courts of Justice. Some late decisions have rendered this arrangement more obviously necessary. Several persons disordered in their understandings committed suicide; and, although the circumstances of the crime were nearly similar, yet the most opposite sentences were pronounced on these occasions; so that the families of those to whom a greater degree of severity was shewn, were necessarily more distressed on account of the mildness manifested to the others.

Every judge of delicacy and honour would undoubtedly experience great satisfaction, to find himself restrained by precise laws from listening to solicitations from friends and party, and from  
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being biaſſed by thoſe feelings, of which it is almoſt impoſſible to be diveſted.

The power of the Senate, conſidered in a collective capacity, is very conſiderable: it judges finally in all criminal cauſes, has the care of the police, and ſupplies the principal magiſtrates. But, as too great a power of individuals is dangerous in a republic, the members of this aſſembly are liable to be changed, and a reviſion or confirmation is annually made, in ſome inſtances by the Sovereign Council, in others by the particular tribes to which the ſenators belong. This annual reviſion is a great check to mal-adminiſtration, and at the ſame time prevents the Senate from gaining ſo great an influence as to be detrimental to the liberties of the people. A burgher is qualified to vote at twenty; is eligible into the Sovereign Council at thirty; and into the Senate at thirty-five. By theſe wiſe regulations, a man muſt have formed ſome experience in public affairs, before he is capable of holding an important charge. The revenues of government, though not exceeding £. 65,000 *per ann.* are more than proportionate to the expences; which are regulated with the ſtricteſt œconomy. The ſtate is not only without debts, but an annual ſaving is depoſited in the public treaſury, for a reſort upon any ſudden emergency. From  
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this fund government supported the whole expence of the war, in 1712, against the Catholic cantons, without imposing any additional tax.

The canton of Zuric is divided into districts or bailliages, which are governed by bailifs nominated by the Sovereign Council. These bailifs, excepting those of Kyburgh and Groningen, cannot pass capital sentence, or order torture. They can arrest and interrogate the delinquent, and punish small misdemeanors by whipping, or banishment from the bailliage. In capital cases, they examine, make out the verbal process, and send the felon to Zuric for further trial. On inquiring into the state of criminal jurisprudence, I learned with satisfaction, that the question had not been inflicted in the capital for these last nine years; which may be presumed to be a prelude to its total abolition; but it is much to be regretted, that whipping, which is a species of torture, is not unfrequently applied, in order to force confession, both in Zuric and in the bailliages; an abuse of justice repugnant to the wisdom of so enlightened a government.

The city of Zuric stands at the northern extremity of the lake, and occupies both sides of the rapid and transparent Limmat. The environs are extremely delightful; an amphitheatre of hills gradually sloping to the borders of the water,

water, enriched with pasture and vines ; dotted with innumerable villas, cottages, and hamlets ; and backed on the west by the Utliberg, a bold and gloomy ridge stretching towards the Albis, and that chain of mountains which rises gradually to the Alps.

The town is divided into two parts ; the old part, furrounded with the same ancient battlements and towers which existed in the thirteenth century, and the suburbs which are strengthened by fortifications in the modern style, but too extensive. The ditches, instead of being filled with stagnant water, are mostly supplied with running streams. The public walk is pleasantly situated in a lawn, at the junction of the Limmat and the Sil, an impetuous and turbid torrent, which descends from the mountains of Einsidlin : two rows of lime-trees planted by the side of the Limmat, and following its serpentine direction, afford an agreeable shade in the heat of summer. The inhabitants are very industrious ; and carry on with success several manufactures : the principal are those of linens and cottons, muslins, and silk-handkerchiefs. The manufacturers do not in general dwell within the walls ; but the materials are mostly prepared, and the work is completed in the adjacent districts. For this reason Zurich does not exhibit the activity and numbers  
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of a great commercial city. The environs, on the contrary, are so extremely populous, that perhaps few districts in the neighbourhood of a town, whose population scarcely exceeds ten thousand inhabitants, contain within so small a compass so many souls. The streets are mostly narrow; the houses and public buildings accord more with plainness and convenience, than with the elegance and splendor of a capital.

The town contained, in 1780, 10,559 souls, in the following proportions: 2583 male burghers, 3464 female burghers; 860 foreign clerks, 250 foreigners; 372 male inhabitants, 444 female inhabitants; 223 men-servants, 1734 maid-servants; and 629 patients in the hospital. The gradual decrease of the population in the town, which arises from the difficulty of obtaining the burghership, will appear from the following table.

1357.	1756.	1762.	769.	1780.
12375	11012	10616	10574	10559

The increase of luxury and opulence will appear from considering that, in 1357, the number of men-servants amounted to only 84, and of maid-servants to 263; whereas, in 1780, the former



mer were 223, and the latter 1734; or near a fifth of the whole population.

The manners of the inhabitants are in general simple, and may perhaps in these times be esteemed antiquated. Dinner is usually served at twelve: in the afternoon the gentlemen assemble in clubs or small societies, in the town during winter, and at their respective villas in summer. They frequently smoke, and partake of wine, fruit, cakes, and other refreshments. The women, for the most part employed in their domestic occupations, or devoted to the improvement of their children, are not fond of visiting. When they go out, they generally assemble in separate coteries, to which only a few men, and those chiefly the nearest relations, are admitted: many of the ladies indeed, from a consciousness of their provincial accent, and a difficulty of expressing themselves in French, seldom make their appearance when strangers are received. It has more than once happened to me, that on being shewn into the apartment wherein the ladies were assembled, the master of the house has taken me by the hand, and led me into another room, where he would have detained me, if I had not requested to be reconducted to the ladies. This reserve begins greatly to abate, and to give place to a more sociable intercourse. Such, however,  
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is the prevalence of national habit, that a few families, which form a more agreeable mixture of company, are considered as differing from the established customs, and are still known by the name of the *French Society*.

Sumptuary laws, as well as those against immorality, are well observed. The former indeed may exist, and be carried into execution even among a people much corrupted; for it may be the policy of government to enforce their observance. But the severest penalties will not be sufficient to prevent crimes of an immoral tendency, amidst a general dissoluteness of manners: the popular principles can alone invigorate such laws, and give to them their full operation. Secret crimes cannot be prevented; but it is an evident proof of public virtue, when open breaches of morality are discountenanced. Among their sumptuary laws, the use of a carriage in the town is prohibited to all sorts of persons except strangers: and it is almost inconceivable that, in a place so commercial and wealthy, luxury should so little prevail.

The militia of the canton amounted, in 1781, to 25,718 infantry, 1025 artillery, 886 dragoons, and 406 chassours; in all 28,235 effective men. There is a military chest at Zuric, established in 1683, and supported by the members of the great council,

council, who, instead of giving an expensive entertainment, are bound on their election or farther promotion to pay a certain sum. From this fund, which has been considerably augmented, £.2000 was taken, in 1770, for the purpose of establishing a magazine of uniforms and arms, which are either distributed, or sold at a low price to the poor peasants who cannot afford to purchase them at their full value; each peasant, according to the military laws of the canton, being obliged to possess his arms and uniform.

The arsenal is well supplied with cannon, arms, and ammunition; and contains a reserve of muskets for thirty thousand men. We saw there, and admired, the two-handed swords and weighty armour of the old Swiss warriors; as also the bow and arrow with which William Tell is said to have shot the apple from the head of his son.

This canton has a regiment and some companies in the service of France, a regiment in that of Holland, and some companies in the service of the king of Sardinia. The king of France pays annually for a regiment of fusiliers, consisting of 1292 men, £.20,348. The colonel receives about £.840 *per ann.*; a captain £.360; and a common soldier £.7. The pay of a regiment of twelve companies, in the Dutch service, is £.25,377.



## LETTER 9.

*Ecclesiastical affairs—State of Literature—Learned Men of Zuric—Society of Physics—Seminaries—Libraries.*

**I**N ecclesiastical affairs the Senate is supreme : the canton is divided into fourteen districts, each governed by a dean, chosen by the synod, from three candidates proposed by the clergy of the diocese. The synod, composed of the whole clergy, and several assessors on the part of the Little Council, meets twice a year. In the last century it had a more democratical form, and exercised jurisdiction over its members : it examined causes between ecclesiastics, and between the ministers and their parishioners ; gave decisions ; enjoyed the power of imprisoning, deposing, and reinstating the ministers ; and exercised an authority dangerous to the state. By degrees their exorbitant prerogatives were annulled ; and, in 1700, the clergy of Zuric succeeded in the establishment of a more aristocratical form.

The principal ministers and professors in the town constitute, in conjunction with several magistrates and other assessors deputed by the civil power, an ecclesiastical and academical council :

to this committee the deans have recourse, in all concerns which seem to exceed their jurisdiction: it determines lesser affairs, and refers cases of importance to the Senate.

The fourteen deans assemble twice a year in Zurich, and compose a *profynode*; in which they depute one of their own body to deliver their requisitions, or *pia desideria*, first to the Ecclesiastical Council, and afterwards to the General Synod. The Ecclesiastical Council takes their requests into deliberation, lays them before the Synod, and, if recommended, they are presented by the assessors to the final decision of the Senate. The ecclesiastical benefices in this canton are extremely moderate. The best living may be worth £. 140 *per ann.* and the worst about £. 30. The salary of the canonries in the capital amounts to £. 120. In general, a clergyman of the town, who has merit, is certain of obtaining a professorship, which adds £. 50 or £. 60 *per ann.* to his other appointments.

The charitable establishments at Zurich, are the orphan-house, which is regulated with extreme attention and care; an alms-house for poor burghers; an hospital for incurables, and that for the sick of all nations, which usually contains between six or seven hundred patients; and the *Allmosen-Amt*, or foundation for the poor: this  
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excellent institution puts out children as apprentices ; and distributes money, clothes, and books of devotion to poor persons, as well in the town as in different parts of the canton, at the recommendation of the respective ministers. In 1697 it distributed £. 300; in 1760, £. 5010; in 1770, £. 4796; and in 1778, £. 5451.

Among the particular institutions must not be omitted the chirurgical seminary: it is formed by voluntary subscriptions, and chiefly supported by Dr. Rhan, an eminent physician, who reads lectures gratis, and gives the profits of a publication, called the *Magazine of Health*, towards maintaining this seminary, for the instruction of young physicians and surgeons, destined to settle in the country.

At Zuric public education is a concern of state, and under the immediate protection of government. The office of a professor gives rank and estimation, and is often held by a member of the Senate and of the Great Council. The principal literary establishments for the instruction of youth are, the Caroline College for students in divinity; *Collegium Humanitatis*, or the college for polite literature; and the school of arts: the first has twelve professors, the second two, and the last seven. The learned languages, divinity, natural history, mathematics, and in short every



species of polite learning, as well as abstruse science, is taught at a small expence in these respective seminaries.

In consequence of the unremitted attention which, since the reformation, government has paid to the education of youth, many eminent persons have flourished in all branches of literature; and there is no town in Switzerland, where letters are more encouraged, or where they have been cultivated with greater success. A learned professor of Zurich has, in a very interesting publication displayed the important services which erudition and science have derived from the labours of his countrymen. In these biographical memoirs appear, among many others, the names of Zuingle and Bullinger, Conrad Gesner, Hottinger, Simler, Spon, Scheutzer, Heydegger, Breitinger, Bodmer, Hertzels, and Solomon Gesner.

Of all the luminaries which Zurich, fertile in great geniuses, has ever produced, Conrad Gesner perhaps occupies the first place. He was born at Zurich in 1516, and died in 1564, in the 48th year of his age. Those who are conversant with the works of this great scholar and naturalist, cannot repress their wonder and admiration at the amplitude of his knowledge in every species of erudition, and the variety of his discoveries in natural history, which was his peculiar

culiar delight. Their wonder and admiration is still further augmented, when they consider the gross ignorance of the age which he helped to enlighten, and the scanty succours he possessed to aid him in thus extending the bounds of knowledge; that he composed his works, and made those discoveries which would have done honour to the most enlightened period, under the complicated evils of poverty, sickness, and domestic uneasiness. A detail of his life and writings, by an author capable of appreciating his multifarious knowledge, would be a just tribute to the merits of this prodigy of learning (*Monstrum Eruditionis*), as he is emphatically styled by Boerhaave.

Bodmer, born in 1698, was alive in 1776, when I first visited Switzerland; but I was at that time ignorant of the German language, and unacquainted with his great merits in reforming the taste of his contemporaries, and familiarizing them to the sublime beauties of Homer and Milton. He died in 1783. I now regret that I did not cultivate the acquaintance of a man, whom the unanimous voice of his contemporaries deservedly style the Father of German literature: whose just criticisms and correct judgment animated the poetical genius of Klopstock, Haller, and Gesner.



I did not omit waiting upon Solomon Gessner, the celebrated author of the *Death of Abel*, and of several idyls, which for their delicate and elegant simplicity are justly esteemed. They abound with those nice touches of exquisite sensibility, which discover a mind warmed with the finest sentiments; and love is represented in the chastest colouring of innocence, virtue, and benevolence. Nor has he confined his subjects merely to the passion of love: paternal affection, and filial reverence; gratitude, humanity, and every moral duty, is exhibited and inculcated in the most pleasing and affecting manner. He has for some time renounced poetry for the pencil; and painting is at present his favourite amusement. A treatise which he has published on landscapes, discovers the elegance of his taste, and the versatility of his genius; while his compositions in both kinds prove the resemblance of the two arts; and that the conceptions of the poet and of the painter are congenial. His drawings in black and white are preferable to his paintings; for, although the ideas in both are equally beautiful or sublime, the colouring is inferior to the design. He has published a handsome edition of his writings in quarto, in which every part of the work is carried on by himself:



himself: he prints them at his own press; and is at once both the drawer and engraver of the plates. It is to be lamented that he has renounced poetry; for, while ordinary writers spring up in great plenty, authors of real genius are rare and uncommon. His drawings are seen only by a few: but his writings are dispersed abroad, translated into every language, and will be admired by future ages, as long as there remains a relish for true pastoral simplicity, or taste for original composition. He is plain in his manners; open, affable, and obliging in his address; and of singular modesty. Gesner died of an apoplexy, March 2d, 1788.

I called also on Mr. Lavater, a clergyman of Zuric, and celebrated physiognomist, who has published four volumes in quarto on that fanciful subject, illustrated with appropriate engravings. This work, however, is rather a desultory collection of observations and conjectures, than a regular system of physiognomy. That particular passions have a strong effect upon particular features, is evident to the most common observer; and it may be conceived, that an habitual indulgence of these passions may possibly, in some cases, impress a distinguishing mark on the countenance: but that a certain cast of features constantly denotes

certain passions; and that by contemplating the countenance, we can infallibly \* discover also the mental qualities, is an hypothesis liable to so many exceptions, as renders it impossible to establish a general and uniform system. But Mr. Lavater, like a true enthusiast, carries his theory much farther: for he not only pretends to discover the characters and passions by the features, complexion, form of the head, turn

\* Mr. Lavater, however, modestly renounces pretensions to infallibility in every case, though he claims it in many instances. This visionary but entertaining author thus closes his preface: “ At the moment I write this, “ my progress (in the science of physiognomy) is such, “ that if there are some physiognomies on which I can “ pronounce no judgment, there are, on the other “ hand, a great many lines and features, on which I “ am able to decide with a conviction of truth and evidence equal to that which I have of my own existence.”

This singular and expensive work was published, both in German and French, under the author's inspection. Its title in German is “ *Physiognomische Fragmente zur beforderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe*; ” in French, “ *Essai sur la Physiognomie destiné à faire connoître l'Homme et à le faire aimer.* ” It has been likewise published in English under the title of “ *An Essay on Physiognomy, designed to promote the knowledge and love of mankind.* ” A cheaper edition, in four volumes 8vo., has been recently published.



of the neck \*, and motion of the arms; but he also draws inferences of the same kind even from the hand-writing. Indeed his system is founded upon such universal principles, that he applies the same rules to all animated nature, extending them not only to brutes, but even to insects. That the temper of a horse may be discovered by his countenance, will not perhaps strike you as absurd: but did you ever hear before, that any quality could be inferred from the physiognomy of a bee, an ant, or a cockchafer? While I give my opinion thus freely concerning Mr. Lavater's notions, you will readily perceive that I am not one of those who are initiated into the mysteries of his art.

Mr. Lavater has not merely confined himself to physiognomy. He has composed sacred hymns and national songs, which are much esteemed for their simplicity. He has also

\* “ Being on a visit to Mr. Zimmerman at Biough,” says Lavater in his preface, “ we stepped to the window  
 “ to notice a military procession, when a face, with which  
 “ I was wholly unacquainted, so forcibly struck me,  
 “ that I formed a decided judgment on the case.  
 “ Reflection had no share in it, for I did not imagine  
 “ that what I had said deserved notice. Mr. Zimmer-  
 “ man immediately asked me, with signs of great sur-  
 “ prise, ‘ on what do you found your judgment?’ I  
 “ replied, ‘ *on the turn of the neck.*’”

given



given to the public numerous works on sacred subjects. I am concerned to add, that the ingenious author extends to religion the same enthusiasm which he has employed in his researches on physiognomy, and in his poetical compositions: the warmth of his imagination hurries him on to adopt whatever is most fanciful and extraordinary; to outstep the limits of sober reason; to be an advocate for the efficacy of absolute faith; for inward illuminations; supernatural visions; and the miraculous effects of *animal magnetism* in the cure of disorders. The insinuating address of Mr. Lavater, the vivacity of his conversation, the amenity of his manners, together with the singularity and animation of his style, have contributed more to diffuse his system and principles, than sound arguments or deep learning, which are not to be found in his lively, but desultory compositions \*.

Among

\* It was natural to imagine, from the enthusiasm of his character, that Lavater would become an advocate for the specious system of French equality. At a distance he hailed the dawn of liberty; but he no sooner felt its nearer approach, than he became one of its most inveterate enemies. He found from experience, that the plausible terms of emancipation, liberty, and equality, were used to sanction pillage, oppression, and despotism. While his country was yet suffering under  
the

Among the eminent men of Zuric, must not be omitted Dr. Hirtzel, a learned physician, who is deservedly styled the Swiss Plutarch, and has, among various publications, more particularly distinguished himself by the *Socrate Rustique*, and by the lives of Sultzer and Heydegger.

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the calamities of French brotherhood, he published his celebrated Philippic against the French Directory, which he dated "the first year of Helvetic Slavery." In this animated apostrophe, after inveighing against the perfidy and despotism of the French, he pays a due tribute of applause to the mild administration of the ancient republic, the remembrance of which the pressure of French despotism rendered more endearing.

"We now imagined that we had accomplished all  
 "your arbitrary mandates, and that no troops should  
 "enter our territories. Vain hope! you came with an  
 "armed force, which you quartered upon our citizens  
 "and peasants. You drained our unhappy country;  
 "and, to crown our humiliation, you imposed a contri-  
 "bution of three millions of livres upon our senatorial  
 "families; the families who for ages had constitution-  
 "ally held the reins of government, and held them  
 "without any imputation of abuse or peculation, cer-  
 "tainly without extortion; who made no struggle to  
 "maintain the exclusive authority our constitution had  
 "vested in them, and against whom, therefore, you  
 "could not allege any well-founded charge. The  
 "liberty you conferred on us, in return for all these  
 "exactions, was the privilege of parting ultimately with  
 "our inestimable freedom."

Leonhard



Leonhard Meister, professor of history and morality in the School of Arts, deserves to be mentioned among the learned men of Zurich. The versatility of his talents will be collected from a bare catalogue of his principal works : which are written in the German tongue.—On Fanaticism ; the History of the German Language and Literature ; Lives of the celebrated men of Zurich ; Swiss Biography ; the most memorable Events of the Helvetic History, in Chronological Order ; Instances of Intolerance and Fanaticism in Switzerland ; Public Law of Switzerland ; History of the Town and Canton of Zurich ; Panegyric on Bodmer ; Excursions through various Parts of Switzerland ; Character of the German Poets, in Chronological Order, with their Portraits ; Abridgment of Antient History, particularly of the Greeks, with an Introduction on the Fine Arts and Polite Literature. In all his writings the judicious author has displayed great zeal for the promotion of learning, correctness of taste, liberality of sentiment, and much historical and biographical knowledge. But in his observations on fanaticism and intolerance, he has treated those subjects in a new light : he has illustrated their dreadful effects on government and civil society by historical events, and in a political view ; he has appealed from theory to experience,



experience, and exemplified questionable arguments by unanswerable facts. In this instance he has been no less useful in combating persecution, than in repressing the spirit of fanaticism that prevailed among many of his countrymen, and which is diffused by men of lively abilities and popular manners \*.

The curiosity of the naturalist will be amply gratified by a view of the library and cabinet of Mr. John Gefner, professor of physics, and canon of the cathedral, who inherits the zeal for natural history which characterised his great ancestor Conrad Gefner. His proficiency in the study of nature, and particularly his accurate skill in botany, has been abundantly testified by the repeated acknowledgments of Haller, whom he accompanied in his herborising excursions through the mountains of Switzerland, and who confesses himself indebted to Gefner for various observations and important discoveries.

\* Since the revolution of Switzerland, Professor Meister has published a tract, "Ueber den Gang der Politischen Bewegungen in der Schweiz," or, "On the Progress of Revolutionary Movements in Switzerland." This work contains many curious particulars concerning the conduct of the Swiss states, and of Zuric in particular, but must be read with caution, as it was plainly written under French influence.

Gefner's

Gesner's cabinet is extremely rich in fossils, and remarkable for the drawings of the principal specimens of his museum; and for numerous representations of insects admirably painted by Schellenberg. One of the most curious parts of his collection, is a great botanical work, which Haller calls *vastissimum et pulcherrimum opus*; and which, it is much to be regretted, he has hitherto withheld from the public. He has exhibited, in eighty tables, a thousand generical characters of plants, according to the Linnæan system, together with many of the specific characters. These tables, intended to illustrate a general history of plants, which, as appears by his own letters to Haller, the author meditated, were drawn and engraved by Geisler, the same person who distinguished himself by painting the shells of Regenfuss\*.

Amidst the various occupations of Gesner, botany, to which he had an early and strong attachment, has engaged a great share of his attention; besides two or three early productions in this line, he began, in the year 1759, to publish a work which he has extended to eight publications, in the quarto form.

\* See Coxe's Travels into Poland, &c. Book viii. chap. iv.

The first seven parts bear the title of *Phytographia Sacra Generalis*; the remaining, that of *Phytographia Sacra Specialis*. In this work the author treats on philosophy, of vegetation in general, and on the circulation of the sap through the particular parts of plants; on the Linnæan system against the objections of Alston; on the uses of plants as food to man, and gives a detail of upwards of a hundred edible kinds, with a compendious account of the specific properties of each; on the medicinal uses of plants; on the various œconomical uses of vegetables, illustrating in a particular manner, among many others, those of the Palm-tree, Flax, and Aloes. In the latter volumes of this work, the author treats on other advantages derived to mankind from the vegetable world. He speaks, for instance, on the nature and constituent parts of turf and peat, and enumerates the species of bog and fen plants which enter into the composition of each; on the kinds of shrubs proper for hedges; on timber for building, and particularly such trees as were used for those purposes by the ancients. In the first part, which is all that is hitherto published, of what he names *Phytographia Sacra Specialis*, he has given an account of those authors who have written on the plants of the holy scriptures, and enters upon the history of each.

The



The Society of Physics owes its origin to Messrs. Heydegger, Schultetz, and John Gefner, who first assembled in 1745, and admitted others, in order to attend a course of lectures on natural history. This course was read by Gefner, professor of physics, who so greatly excited the attention, and animated the zeal of his audience, that in a short space of time the members were increased to seventy. The first regular meeting was held in 1745, in a private house; and in a few years they deserved and received the protection of government, which granted the profits of a lottery towards establishing a fund. There are now about a hundred and twelve members: each pays on his admittance eight florins, or about seventeen shillings, and the same sum annually. Since 1757, a suite of apartments, in a house belonging to one of the tribes, has been assigned for holding their assemblies, and for containing their library and apparatus.

The society is divided into five departments. 1. Physics. 2. Mathematics. 3. Natural history. 4. Medicine. 5. Application of physics to arts and trades. But the grand and principal object of this society, is the encouragement and improvement of practical agriculture. For this purpose the members correspond with the landholders in different parts of the canton; visit various

rious districts in rotation; summon to Zuric some of the best informed farmers; acquaint themselves with the state of husbandry; give them instructions; offer prizes for improvements in cultivation; furnish small sums of money to the poorer peasants: and communicate to the public the result of their inquiries and observations.

The public library at Zuric contains about 25,000 volumes, and a few curious manuscripts. Among which, the following principally attracted my attention. 1. The original manuscript of Quintilian, found in the library of St. Gallen, and from which the first edition of that great rhetorician was printed. 2. The psalms in the Greek tongue, written on parchment dyed of a violet colour. The letters are silver, excepting the initials, which are in golden characters, and the marginal references, which are red. It is similar to the celebrated *Codex Argenteus* \* in the library of Upsala. It is supposed to have once formed part of the *Codex Vaticanus*, preserved in the Vatican library at Rome: as both these manuscripts are similar, and the Roman volume is deficient in the psalms. The learned Breitinger has published a dissertation on

\* See Travels into Poland, Russia, &c. Book vii. chap. vi.

this codex \*. 3. Several manuscripts of Zuingle, which prove the indefatigable industry of that celebrated reformer. Among these I particularly noticed his Latin Commentary on Genesis and Isaiah, and a copy of St. Paul's Epistles from the Greek Testament published by Erasmus. At the end is written an inscription in the Greek tongue, signifying, "Copied by Ulric Zuingle, 1415." It was presented to the public library by Ann Zuingle, the last survivor of his illustrious race. 4. Three Latin letters from Lady Jane Grey to Bullinger, in 1551, 1552, and 1553. These letters, written with her own hand, breathe a spirit of the most unaffected piety, and prove the extraordinary progress which this unfortunate and accomplished princess, though only in the sixteenth year of her age, had made in various branches of literature. The Greek and Hebrew quotations shew that she was well acquainted with those languages. These letters, though given in several publications, yet are not printed with that accuracy, which the relics of such a personage deserve. This library is rich in the best editions of the classics; and particularly in the early impressions of the 15th century.

\* De Antiquissimo Turicensis Bibliothecæ Græco Psalmorum Libro Turici. 1748.



The library of the cathedral belonging to the Caroline College, contains several manuscripts of the reformers Bullinger, Pelican, Bibliander, and Leon Juda; particularly the translation of the Talmud by Pelican and Bibliander, which has never been printed; also sixty volumes of letters from Zuingle and the early reformers, with a complete index. This collection, so interesting to ecclesiastical history, was formed by Henry Hottinger \*, the learned author of the History of the Reformation, renowned for his extensive erudition, and particularly for his profound skill in oriental literature. The librarian pointed out an antient manuscript of the Latin Vulgate, called *Codex Carolinus*, and supposed to have been a present from Charlemain; but without foundation, for it is certainly of much later date, probably of the eleventh century. Among the rare books is the Latin Bible, translated by Pelican, Bibliander, and Leon Juda, printed at Zuric in 1545.

The lover of literary and ecclesiastical history will not fail to inspect the Reverend Mr. Simler's ample collection of letters, which passed

\* He was born in 1620; and was drowned in the Limmat, 1667.

between Zuingle and the other reformers of Zurich, and their correspondents in different parts of Europe. The learned professor proposed to print by subscription, in two volumes folio, the letters of the English reformers, several of which Burnet has published in his History of the Reformation, but with many errors. Not finding, however, sufficient subscribers for so expensive a work, he was obliged to relinquish his plan, to the regret of all lovers of biography.

The library of M. de Heydegger, senator of Zurich, deserves the notice of the learned traveller. The ingenious possessor inherited from his father only 3000 volumes, which he has extended to 15,000. His principal aim is directed to those books that were unknown to Maittaire, which might assist in correcting his typographical annals, and in forming an accurate and connected history of printing. In this collection are found many rare and elegant impressions by the Alduses, Juntas, Giolitos, Torzentino, Stephens, Elzevirs, Comino, Tonson, Wetstein, Baskerville, Bodoni, Barbot, and Didot. It is particularly rich in the earliest impressions, of which there are no less than

than seven hundred printed in the fifteenth century\*.

\* Among many rare books, I noted down the following: Ciceronis Officia. Fust et Scheiffer 1465. pet. in folio.—Jo. Sanuensis Catholicon, folio. Aug. Vindel. Gunther, Zeiner et Reutlingen, 1469.—First edition of Petrarcha Venet. Vindel. de Spira, 1470. See Cat. de la Valliere, 1783. No. 3579.—First edition of Dante, C. Fulginei Neumeister 1472. See la Valliere, No. 3558.—Boccacio Genealogia Deorum et liber de Montibus et Sylvis. Venet. Vindel. de Spira, 1472 and 1473. First edition.—De Claris Mulieribus. Ulma Sv. Zeiner, 1473. First edition, with wooden cuts, very singular. See Catalogue de la Valliere, No. 3810 and 5609.—Boccacio Decamerone Venet. Gio. et Gregor. de Gregorii fratelli, 1492, folio, wooden cuts. The Decameron translated into German about 1475, folio.—Mamontreclus Beronæ p. Helian Helix, 1470, folio. This book was printed at Munster, in the canton of Lucerne, and is curious, because it is the first instance of typography in Switzerland.



## LETTER 10.

*Expedition along the Borders of the Lake of Zurich  
—Rychterschwyl—Isle of Ufnau—Rapperschwyl  
—Grunengen—Ustar—Greiffensee—Excursion  
to Regensberg, and to the Summit of the Lager-  
berg.*

**D**URING my first tour through Switzerland, I passed too short a time at Zurich to have an opportunity of visiting the delightful environs, which, for mild beauties of nature, numerous population, and well-being of the peasantry, is scarcely surpassed by any spot on the globe. Having, on subsequent occasions, resided longer at Zurich, I did not omit making several excursions into various parts of the canton; an account of which will form the subject of the present letter.

The weather clearing up after several continued and heavy rains, on the 24th of June, 1785, I accompanied M. de Bonstet of Bern, Professor Meister, and some other gentlemen of Zurich, in a delightful tour round the lake. We had no need of guides, as the country was well known to my companions, and we  
had

had no incumbrance of baggage. Having made an early dinner, according to the custom of the place, we departed at mid-day; walked about three miles, through vineyards and corn-fields, to Kuffnach, a small village on the east side of the lake, where we paid a visit to a gentleman, and were served with tea, slices of bread and butter, and cherries.

In 1778, Kuffnach was considerably damaged by the rise of a small torrent, which rushed down the mountains, carried away twenty-five houses, and destroyed about sixty persons. This torrent, now only a little rill, swelled to such a degree, as to rise at least thirty feet above its usual level; an increase owing to the sudden melting of the snow on the neighbouring heights. Every assistance was instantly afforded to the wretched inhabitants, and a collection of £. 3000 raised in one Sunday at the different churches of Zurich: an astonishing collection for a town which does not contain 11,000 souls.

I am indebted to Professor Meister for several observations \* on the population, industry, and productions of Kuffnach, and the neighbouring villages.

Having

\* Kuffnach contains about 1700 souls, and the neighbouring villages are no less peopled: this astonishing

Having "reposed ourselves about an hour at Kuffnach, we continued our walk through vine-  
yards

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population in so small a compass is occasioned by the trade of the capital, which employs many hands. The proportion between the produce of the soil, and the profits derived from working for the manufactures, may be estimated from the following calculation: Five parishes and two villages, situated near the lakes of Zurich and Greiffen, contain 8498 souls; and comprehend only 6050 acres of arable land, 698 of vines, and 3407 of pasture, or scarcely an acre and a quarter for each person. Their subsistence is principally supplied by 2016 looms, by means of which they prepare silk and cotton for the merchants of Zurich. In these parts an acre is sold for £. 100 or £. 120; whereas the same quantity in the interior part of the canton is worth only £. 20 or £. 30. The acre here mentioned contains from 32,600 to 36,000 square feet.

In sixteen parishes, situated on the borders of the lake, the number of inhabitants, in 1784, were 32,581. There were 271 marriages, 1135 births. The proportion of the marriages to the births, as 1000 to 4188; of the births to the deaths, as 1000 to 882; of the births to the living, as 1000 to 18,705; of the deaths to the living, as 2000 to 32,515; of the males to the females, as 1000 to 1097.

I have already observed in the note (p. 69), that these borderers of the lake were the first to adopt the French principles, and had a chief share in promoting the subjection of the canton.

During



yards and corn-fields, sometimes on the sloping banks of the lake, sometimes on a small foot-path formed on terraces upon a level with the water; or along narrow roads that resemble gravel walks winding through pleasure-grounds and parks in England. We enjoyed, during great part of the way, the most agreeable shade from large beech and oak, walnut and other fruit-trees, that overhang like weeping willows; many of which are planted almost horizontally, either stretching from the sides of the hill, or

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During the effervescence of the revolution their grievances were exaggerated, and they were compared with the African slaves in the West Indies. They were certainly excluded by the commercial government of Zurich from some rights, which they ought to have enjoyed; but their condition upon the whole was extremely easy and comfortable, as sufficiently appeared from the flourishing state of the country. Even General Schawembourg, as he sailed up the Lake, and observed the borders, luxuriant in cultivation and industry, and with every mark of prosperity, could not avoid exclaiming, “ Il est cependant difficile de retrouver ici les traces du despotisme.”

In fact these borderers had no sooner effected a change in the constitution, and obtained possession of power, than they wished to retain it; and attempting to resist the aggression of the French, they were disarmed, pillaged, and fined.

from

from the margin of the water, their boughs dipping into the lake: the scattered cottages, the numerous villages, the picturesque villas placed on the banks, and several neat churches, added to the beauty of the ever-changing scenery.

Having continued our walk about three miles, we stopped at a peasant's house in Meile, who regaled us with our usual fare, milk and cherries, but would receive no recompense. Here we embarked and crossed the lake, enjoying a most agreeable view of each border studded with villas, churches, and villages, half concealed by the intervening trees. As we passed near a bold promontory, richly covered with wood, we observed the sun, which was hid under a cloud, gilding the distant town of Rapperschwyl, the hills towards Zurich silvered by a milder ray, and the sublime mountains of Glarus rising in gloomy majesty from the southern extremity of the lake.

We landed at Weddenschweil, which is agreeably situated on the west side of the lake. It is the capital of a bailliage, that stretches to the limits of the cantons of Zug and Schweitz, and was formerly an independent lordship. In 1287 it was sold by Rodolph of Weddenschweil to the knights of Jerusalem; and became a commandery

dery until 1459, when Zurich purchased it from the master of that order for 20,000 florins. The inhabitants, having revolted in 1466, were deprived of several privileges, and particularly the criminal jurisdiction, which was transferred to the senate of Zurich. Notwithstanding the loss of these immunities, the mildness of government is sufficiently manifested, by the considerable increase of the population within this last century; the number of souls, which in 1678 consisted of only 4867, amounted in 1782 to 8188.

Near Weddenschweil, a beautiful meadow, skirted with wood, and fertilized by a lively stream, tempted us to quit the road, and we had scarcely proceeded fifty paces before we saw a silver rill gushing from the crevice of a rock fringed with wood. While we were contemplating this pleasing landscape, we heard the noise of falling waters, and caught a glimpse of a torrent tumbling from an elevated rock, glistening through the dark foliage, and richly illumined by the rays of the sun, which was concealed from our view. Having penetrated by the side of the torrent, we saw it bursting from the height, amid surrounding trees, fall about six feet upon a ridge, and  
then



then roll fifty feet in mid air. The effect was peculiarly striking. Nor could we sufficiently admire the amphitheatre of rock, the beeches suspended on its top and sides, the beams of the sun darting on the falling waters, and the noise of the torrent contrasted with the mild and tranquil beauties of the lake.

Our walk to Richliswick, where we passed the night, was no less agreeable than that on the other side of the lake. The road ran sometimes through meadows, at a little distance from the lake, sometimes close to the water, under the shade of trees scattered by the hand of nature, in the most capricious shapes: we scarcely advanced a hundred steps without passing a neat cottage, and meeting with peasants, who saluted us as we went along; every spot of ground is highly cultivated, and bore the appearance of industry and plenty.

At Richliswick, which, like Weddenschweil, contains many good houses of stone, plaistered and white-washed, ornamented with green window-shutters, and Venetian blinds, we found an inn with comfortable accommodations. This place is the passage of much merchandize to different parts on the shores of the lake, and  
is

is greatly resorted to by the pilgrims, in their way to Einsidlin \*.

Early the next morning we embarked for the Isle of Ufnau. The weather was uncommonly fine, the lake quite still, the reflection of the white houses quivered on the surface of the water; the hollows of the distant mountains seemed to be filled with a transparent vapour, which induced me to cry out, in the language of poetry,

“ Pleasant the sun,

“ When first on this delightful land he spreads

“ His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,

“ Glist’ring with dew †.”

\* These once happy districts on both sides of the lake of Zurich, after an undisturbed tranquillity of three hundred years, became, in May 1798, the scene of devastation and carnage, in the unequal conflict between the French and the Swiss peasants of the small cantons, who rose to defend their liberties, and, after entering Lucerne, marched in two bodies on each side of the lake, to drive the French from Zurich. After an obstinate resistance against superior forces, the corps on the north side of the lake were defeated with great slaughter, and Rapperschwyl stormed and pillaged. Five thousand Swiss, stationed near Richterschwyl, repulsed the French at the first onset, but with the aid of artillery were at length overpowered. Their spirited resistance even extorted the applause of the French commander.

† Milton’s Paradise Lost.

About

About a mile from Richliswick is a single house standing on a gentle acclivity, the walls of which divide the canton of Zurich from that of Schweitz, and at the same time set instant bounds to that industry and population which had attracted our wonder and delight.

In two hours we landed at Ufnau, which is about an English mile in circumference, and belongs to the abbey of Einsidlin. It contains only a single house, inhabited by a peasant's family, two barns, a kind of tower or summer-house, seated on the highest point, a chapel never used, and a church in which mass is said only twice in the year. Within is the tomb of St. Alderic, who built an hermitage on the island, to which he retired. He died in 1473, and was highly revered for his supposed sanctity; as a Latin inscription informs us, that "he was fed with bread from heaven, " and walked upon the surface of the waters." This island is sometimes called Hutten's Island, in memory of that extraordinary person, who retired and died in this obscure spot.

Hutten, descended from an illustrious family, was born at Seckenberg in Franconia, and receiving an education suitable to his birth, prosecuted his studies with that impetuous zeal which was the leading mark of his character.



He paſſed a life of almoſt unparalleled viciffitude ; ſometimes in the camp, ſignalized for perſonal courage ; in univerſities, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by various publications ; in courts, received with reſpect, or driven away for insolence ; and wandering over different parts of Europe in extreme indigence. Having, at an early period of his life, embraced the opinions of Luther, he uſed both his pen and his ſword in defence of the new doctrines ; was ſo intemperate in his ardour, that he was frequently imprifoned, and alarmed even the daring ſpirit of Luther by his repeated outrages. After rendering himſelf an object of terror both to Lutherans and Catholics, he in vain fought repoſe until he found it in this ſequeſtered iſland. He expired in 1523, in the 36th year of his age : a man as remarkable for genius and learning, as for turbulence and preſumption.

The iſland is agreeably broken into hill and dale, is extremely fertile in paſture, produces hemp, flax, a few vines, and a ſmall tufted wood, which overhangs the margin of the water. It is the only iſland in the lake of Zurich, except an uninhabited rock, which yields a ſmall quantity of hay.

Having

Having reembarked, we soon landed at Rapperschwyl \*, and continued ascending amid hanging enclosures of pasture and corn, commanding a fine view of the lake, hills, mountains, and alps. Passing the little territory belonging to Rapperschwyl, we came into the canton of Zurich, and entering a neat cottage, to inquire the road, we saw a peasant teaching about thirty children to read and write. On expressing my satisfaction, I was informed that each village has a peasant schoolmaster, either entirely or partly paid by government ; and that in this canton there is scarcely a child who is not instructed in reading and writing. A little further we entered another cottage, where the mistress of the house offered us milk and cherries, and placed upon the table nine or ten large silver spoons.

We continued our walk through an enclosed, hilly, and well-wooded country, and arrived about mid-day at Grunengen, a small burgh, capital of the bailliage. After dinner we paid a visit to the bailif, who resides in the castle, which stands on an elevated rock, overlooking an extensive prospect ; towards the south wild and romantic, towards the west rich and well

\* See Letter 7.

cultivated, and watered by a lively stream which flows from the lake of Pfeffikon.

The bailif possesses considerable authority. He judges civil and criminal affairs, in the presence of certain jurymen and the under-bailif; but can pass sentence without their concurrence, as neither of them enjoys a vote. He can punish all crimes which are not capital; can order whipping, or even the torture, to be inflicted, when the criminal is convicted, and will not confess; and I was greatly shocked to find that this horrid expedient had been lately practised. Even in capital cases he can condemn to death, provided he summons eighty jurymen from the different districts to be present at the trial; but as this custom is attended with much expence, he usually sends the culprit to Zurich; in civil proceedings an appeal lies from his decision to the senate of Zurich.

If the bailif abuses his power, the senate readily listens to the complaints of the oppressed, and would not fail to punish the unjust judge. An instance of this impartiality occurred in 1754, when the bailif was proved guilty of extortions, and, though son-in-law to the burgomaster, was fined and banished from Switzerland. I learned this fact, on observing a vacant place in the series of arms belonging



to the several bailiffs, which are painted in the hall of the castle; those of the extortioner, which once filled this vacant place, had been erased by order of government.

From Grunengen we pursued our course through lanes, fields, and enclosures, along a most delightful country, abounding in vines, corn, pasture, and wood. As the setting sun gradually descended below the horizon, we frequently looked back upon the distant alps, the lower parts were dusky and gloomy, and the summits

*“ Arrayed with reflected purple and gold,*

*“ And colours dipt in heav’n \*.”*

At the close of the evening I arrived at Ustar; regretting that our day’s journey was concluded, and not feeling in the least fatigued with a walk of eighteen miles, from Rapperschwyl to Ustar; so greatly was I delighted with the beauties of this romantic country. Ustar is a large parish, containing 3000 souls; the wooden cottages are neat and commodious, resembling those in the canton of Appenzel, and are dispersed in the same manner over hills and dales.

\* Milton.

The sun had scarcely risen before we quitted our beds, and walked to the castle of Ustar; it stands boldly on an elevated rock, planted to its very summit with vines, and commands a most extensive view, bounded by the Jura, the mountains of the Black Forest, and the chain of alps stretching from the canton of Appenzel to the confines of the Vallais. Below and around, the country resembled the most cultivated and enclosed parts of England; a small lively stream winded through an immense plain; while the lake of Greiffen appeared like a broad river, washing the bottom of the adjacent hills.

This castle was formerly a strong fortress, and the residence of the counts of Ustar, who held it and the district as a fief from the counts of Ravenspurgh; and on the extinction of that house, in the middle of the fourteenth century, it was transferred to the family of de Bonstet; was purchased, in 1552, by Zurich, and united to the bailliage of Greiffensee. M. de Bonstet, whom I have mentioned as one of our party, derived great satisfaction in tracing the antiquity and history of this seat, formerly possessed by his ancestors, and in observing the family arms painted upon the glass windows. This castle

is now a private gentleman's house, and belongs to M. Teyler of Weddenschweil.

From Ustar we crossed the fields, and arrived at the lake of Greiffen. We walked for some way on a belt of turf, along its borders, under the pendulous branches of oak, beech, and elms. This lake is about six miles long and a mile broad; on one side the shores are flat or gently rising, on the other side hills richly wooded. The dearth of cottages and inhabitants, in this delightful but solitary spot, formed a striking contrast with the numerous villages we had recently quitted; while the southern extremity of the lake seemed almost bounded by that magnificent chain of alps, which constantly engaged our attention.

Having embarked in a small boat, we passed the village of Greiffen, pleasingly situated on a small promontory embosomed in a wood, and landed at the northern extremity of the lake. Here I bathed, and walked on gently, ascending through fertile grounds, delightfully planted with oak, beech, and poplars, and innumerable fruit-trees. At a small village we stopped at the parsonage. You can scarcely form to yourself an adequate idea of the neatness and simplicity which reign in these parts. The clergyman's

two



two daughters, about fifteen or sixteen years of age, neatly dressed, with straw hats, like the peasant girls of the country, politely brought milk and cherries for our refreshment. From this retreat of innocence and simplicity we ascended about a mile, then burst upon a charming view of Zurich, the lake, and environs; and, gently descending, arrived at Zurich, quite enchanted with this short expedition.

An expedition to the summit of the Lagerberg was no less agreeable than the former excursion. I procured a guide and a horse; but the weather proving fine, I gave the horse to my servant, and preferred walking across the corn-fields, and meadows tufted with thickets, and enlivened by the numerous labourers employed in the harvest. In these parts, as well as the neighbouring districts, I observed with pleasure, that the oxen, which were not yoked to the teams or ploughs, but harnessed like horses, performed their labour with much more ease, and with greater effect. This custom has been lately introduced into some parts of England; and all unprejudiced farmers allow its superior advantage; as the yoke is extremely galling, and four oxen harnessed with collars will do as much work as six when yoked by the neck.

A few miles from Zurich, I passed through the village of Affholteren, near the church, which is prettily situated in the middle of a large field ; skirted the small lake of Kasten, at a little distance from the picturesque ruins of Old Regensberg, and gently ascended to New Regensberg, which stands on an elevation, at the foot of the Lagerberg.

The counts of Regensberg were powerful barons during that period of anarchy and confusion which distinguished the twelfth and thirteenth centuries ; they were involved in constant wars, or rather desultory skirmishes, with the town of Zurich, until they were finally repulsed by Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, then captain-general of the troops of Zurich. On the extinction of the counts of Regensberg, in the fourteenth century, their territory devolved to the House of Austria, and in 1409 became subject to Zurich.

The present burgh contains about 200 inhabitants, who enjoy considerable privileges : a burgomaster, and a council of six members, form the civil court of justice, from whose decision an appeal lies directly to Zurich ; the criminal jurisdiction belongs to the bailif, who resides in the castle. This building was formerly of great strength, and frequently defied the

the attacks of Zurich. The greater part of the present edifice was constructed in the last century ; the only remains of the ancient fortress being some stone walls, and a round tower, which commands a distant prospect. A well in the middle of the burgh, hollowed in the rock to the depth of 216 feet, but now dry, furnished the garrison with water during the obstinate sieges maintained before the invention of gunpowder. Near this well is a copious fountain, supplied from a spring that rises in the Lagerberg. The adjacent country is a most delightful intermixture of hill and dale. The rock on which Regensberg is built, terminates in an abrupt precipice, and forms the eastern extremity of that vast chain of mountains known by the general name of Jura, the branches of which are distinguished by different appellations. The branch that rises from this point is called the *Lagerberg*, to the summit of which I mounted on horseback. I passed for some way through cultivated enclosures, and afterwards through forests of pine, fir, and beech, until I reached the highest point, on which stands a signal house. From this point, which overlooks the whole country, I enjoyed one of the most extensive and uninterrupted prospects, particularly the finest distant view of the Alps, which I had yet seen in Switzerland.



To the north, the eye expatiates freely over the wilds of the Black Forest; to the east, beyond the confines of Bavaria; towards the west, traces the branches of the Jura extending in multifarious directions; to the south, looks down upon the fertile and enclosed regions in the canton of Zurich, on the lake and its populous banks, and admires the vast expanse of country swelling from plains to acclivities, from acclivities to hills, from hills to mountains, and terminating in those stupendous alps,

*“ Whose heads touch heaven.”*

This wonderful and sublime prospect detained me insensibly till the close of the evening, when I descended through the dark forests that clothe the sides of the Lagerberg; and, filled with those pleasing but melancholy reflections which the indescribable beauties of nature leave upon the mind, rode slowly on, and did not arrive at Zurich till the gloom of night had overspread the horizon.

## LETTER II.

*Winterthur—Castle of Kyburgh.*

**W**INTERTHUR stands about twelve miles from Zurich; a town which, although situated in the canton, and under the protection of Zurich, yet retains its own laws, has its own magistrates, and is in a great measure independent. Winterthur was formerly governed by its own counts, who were probably a branch of the Kyburgh family, for both houses bore the same arms. In the fourteenth century it was possessed by Hartman, count of Kyburgh, who first surrounded it with walls; and upon his death devolved to his nephew Rhodolph of Hapsburgh. Rhodolph, afterwards emperor, conferred upon the inhabitants considerable privileges, for assisting him in the war in which he was engaged with Ottocar, king of Bohemia. It continued subject to his descendants until 1424, when the inhabitants claimed the protection, and obtained the alliance, of Zurich. In 1467, the archduke Sigismund having sold his rights to Zurich, that canton succeeded to his prerogatives. A deputy from Zurich resides at Winterthur,

thur, but for no other purpose than collecting the toll, half of which belongs to Zurich.

The government is aristocratical; the supreme power, in all things not interfering with the claims of Zurich, resides in the Great and Little Council. These two tribunals united are final judges in all criminal procedures, and pass sentence of death without appeal. The Little Council is invested with the general administration of affairs, and determines civil causes in the first resort; from their decision an appeal lies to the Great Council, and in all processes between a stranger and a burgher, to the senate of Zurich.

Although the town is considered as independent, and only under the protection of the canton, yet Zurich claims the right of restricting the inhabitants from manufacturing silk, and from establishing a printing-press, as interfering with the natives of Zurich. This claim has occasioned great discontents, and given rise to much litigation: and though Zurich does not prohibit the manufacture of silk, yet by forbidding the peasants of the canton from preparing and spinning the materials, this order amounts to a virtual prohibition. A similar dispute is in agitation concerning the establishment of a printing-press at Winterthur. The  
right



right will scarcely be controverted; but as the cause will be finally determined by Zurich, it remains a doubt whether that government will be sufficiently disinterested to decide in favour of Winterthur against its own burghers.

In all other respects, excepting in these two articles of trade so profitable to Zurich, the commerce of Winterthur lies under no restraint. The principal manufactures are muslins, printed cottons, and cloth; some vitriol works are carried on with considerable success.

The town is small, and the inhabitants, who amount to about two thousand, are for the most part remarkably industrious. The schools in this petty state are well endowed and regulated. The public library contains a small collection of books, and a great number of Roman coins and medals, chiefly found at Ober-Winterthur; among the most rare I observed a Didius Julianus and a Pertinax. Ober-Winterthur, or Upper Winterthur, at present only a small village near the town, in the high road leading to Frauenfeld, is the site of the ancient *Vitodurum*, a Roman station, and the most considerable place in this neighbourhood. It exhibits no other remains of former consequence, but the foundations of ancient walls, and the numerous Roman coins and medals which

which are continually discovered. The Roman way, which once traversed the marshes between Winterthur and Frauenfeld, is no longer visible, because it forms the foundation of the present high road \*.

The castle of Kyburgh, towering on the summit of an eminence overlooking Winterthur, is a picturesque object, remarkable in the history of this country, during the times of confusion which preceded and followed the interregnum of the empire.

In the beginning of the twelfth century, the counts of Kyburgh possessed the counties of Kyburgh, Lentzburgh, and Baden; and their territories were further increased by the accession of Burgdorf and Thun, which fell to Ulric† in right of his wife Anne, sister and heir of Berchtold V. duke of Zæringen. These domains devolving, in 1273, to Rhodolph count of Hapsburgh, on the death of his uncle Hartman the elder, the last count of Kyburgh,

\* Winterthur is now incorporated in the canton or department of Zurich.

† Some authors assert that Werner, son of Ulric, was the husband of Anne. Great confusion reigned in the early history of the counts of Kyburgh, until Fuesli cleared it up. See article Kyburgh in Fuesli's *Erdbeschreibung*.

rendered him one of the most powerful princes in these parts, and probably opened his way to the imperial throne. Before his decease, the emperor ceded to his son Rhodolph the county of Kyburgh, and his other dominions in Switzerland; and, on his demise, confirmed this grant to his grandson John, the same who assassinated his uncle, the emperor Albert \*, and was called the Parricide.

Upon the death of Albert, his sons seized and kept possession of Kyburg, and the other hereditary domains in Switzerland, and transmitted them to their posterity. In 1424, the emperor Sigismund put under the ban of the empire Frederic duke of Austria, and granted for a sum of money the county of Kyburgh to Zurich. In 1442 it was restored to the House of Austria, but, in 1452, finally ceded to Zurich by Sigismund, archduke of Austria, to liquidate a debt which he owed to the canton. From that time it has formed a bailliage in the canton of Zurich; but the title of Count of Kyburgh has been always used by the House of Austria, and is still retained by its present illustrious descendant] Joseph the Second.

\* See Letter 14.



The castle of Kyburgh, which stands in a romantic and wild situation, has been constructed at different periods. Part is ancient, and not improbably the same as existed in the time of Rhodolph; although I could not discover a date anterior to 1424, the year in which it was granted to Zurich. In an apartment which was formerly a stable, are the portraits of all the bailifs who have resided in the castle from the time of its cession. The bailif enjoys greater powers than are usually delegated by an aristocratical government; in criminal proceedings, he is only required to consult the jury of the district, though he is not bound by their opinion, and can even inflict capital punishment without the necessity of referring the sentence to be confirmed by Zurich.

## LETTER 12.

*Frauenfeld — Of the Helvetic Confederacy —  
Diets.*

FROM Winterthur I passed to Frauenfeld, a small town, or rather village, the capital of Thurgau \*, containing scarcely a thousand inhabitants; and only remarkable as the place where, since 1712, the deputies of the Swiss cantons assemble at the general diet.

This confederacy owes its origin to the treaty contracted between Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, at the memorable revolution of 1308 †. The subsequent accession of Zurich, Bern,

\* Thurgau was a bailliage subject to the eight ancient cantons. In the beginning of February the people in some parts of the country rose, elected deputies, and demanded their emancipation, which seems to have been granted to the inner district on the 5th. The people, however, were in general much incensed against the French, and their troops were marching to the assistance of Bern when the capture was announced.

In the new division of Switzerland, Thurgau was formed into a canton, of which Frauenfeld is the capital.

† See Letter 25.

Lucerne, Zug, and Glarus, gave strength and solidity to the union, and a century and a half elapsed before a new member was admitted. At length, in 1501, Friburgh and Soleure being, after much difficulty, received into the league; upon that occasion the eight ancient cantons entered into a covenant, called the *Convention of Stantz*, by which the articles of union and mutual protection were finally settled \*.

No change was effected by the subsequent reception of the three remaining cantons, Basle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel; as they subscribed to the same terms which Friburgh and Soleure had accepted. Without entering, however, into a minute detail, I shall endeavour, in this letter, to lay before you a short view of the Helvetic confederacy.

The code of public law between the combined republics of Switzerland, is founded upon the treaty of † Sempach 1393; upon the  
convention

\* See Letter 26.

† This treaty, which regulates the articles of war, was contracted between the eight ancient cantons, in conjunction with the republic of Soleure. It ordains, that no Swiss soldier shall quit his ranks in time of action, even although he should be dangerously wounded:

“ Nous



convention of Stantz; and upon the treaty of peace concluded in 1712, at Arau, between the Protestant and Catholic cantons. It appears from these several treaties, which include or enlarge those that preceded, that the Helvetic union is a perpetual *defensive* alliance between the thirteen independent contracting powers, to protect each other by their united forces against all foreign enemies. Accordingly, if any member of the union should be attacked, that particular canton has a right to demand succours from the \* whole confederate body; and

“ Nous entendons aussi que si quelqu’un s’étoit blessé  
 “ en quelque façon que ce fût en combatant ou en assail-  
 “ lant, de sorte qu’il seroit inutile pour se défendre; il  
 “ demeurera non obstant aussi avec les autres, jusques à  
 “ ce que la bataille soit expirée: et pour cela ne sera  
 “ estimé fuyard et ne l’en fâchera-t-on en sa personne  
 “ n’y en son bien aucunement.”

\* The respectable author of the *Account of Switzerland* has fallen into a mistake in his description of the Helvetic union; and his error has been adopted by the Abbé Mably, in his *Droit Public de l’Europe*; by the compilers of the *Encyclopédie*; and by several other writers of distinction.

After having given a description of the Helvetic union, he concludes the relation as follows: “ So far are they  
 “ (the thirteen cantons) from making one body or one

and in case of war the several forces to be supplied by each canton are precisely specified.

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“ commonwealth, that only the three old cantons are  
“ directly allied with every one of the other twelve.  
“ There is indeed such a connection established between  
“ them, that in case any one canton were attacked, all  
“ the other twelve would be obliged to march to its succour ; but it would be by virtue of the relation, that  
“ two cantons may have to a third, and not of any direct  
“ alliance subsisting between every one of them: As  
“ for example: Of the eight old cantons, Lucerne has  
“ a right of calling but five to its succour, in case of  
“ attack; but then some of those five have a right of  
“ calling others, with whom they are allied, though  
“ Lucerne be not; so that at last all must march by  
“ virtue of particular alliances, and not of any general  
“ one amongst them all.”

The above-cited account of the Helvetic union would better have suited the league of the eight cantons before the convention of Stantz; when the confederate states were not so absolutely and directly united together as they are at present; and their alliance did not perhaps totally exclude every treaty of the same kind with other powers. It was only by the articles of that celebrated convention, and the alliance of the eight cantons with Friburgh and Soleure, that the union became absolutely fixed and general. It must be confessed, however, that several Swiss historians have given the same idea of the Helvetic union as that above mentioned; and that even now authors differ considerably upon some important articles of the league.

It

It appears, however, from the stipulations to which the five cantons agreed, that they do not, in every respect, enjoy equal prerogatives with the eight ancient cantons, which reserved to themselves a right, if the question for declaring war against any foreign state should be *unanimously* carried in their assembly, to require the assistance of the five other cantons, without assigning the motive. But the five cantons cannot commence hostilities without the consent of the confederates; and should the enemy be willing to enter into a negociation, the dispute must be referred to the arbitration of the eight ancient cantons. It is further stipulated, that, in case of a rupture between the eight cantons, the five must observe a strict neutrality.

The next essential object of the league is to preserve general peace and good order. It is therefore covenanted, that all public discussions shall be finally settled between the contending parties in an amicable manner; and for this purpose particular judges and arbiters are appointed, who shall be empowered to compose the dissensions that may happen to arise. To this is added a reciprocal guarantee of the forms of government established in the respective commonwealths: for, in order to prevent internal

K 2

factions,



factions, and revolts in any of the allied cantons, it was agreed by the convention of Stantz, that, in time of rebellion, the magistracy of such canton should be assisted by the forces of the others. Accordingly, the history of Switzerland affords many instances of protection and assistance reciprocally given between the confederates, in defence and support of the respective governments.

No separate engagement, which any of the cantons may conclude, can be valid, if inconsistent with the fundamental articles of this general union; for the reciprocal contract between the members of the league supercedes every other species of public obligation. With these exceptions, the combined states are independent of each other: they may form alliances with any power, or reject the same, although all the others have acceded to it\*; may grant  
auxiliary

\* The five cantons which agreed not to conclude any treaty without the consent of the eight, are necessarily excluded from this power, together with those particular cantons, which have bound themselves by private treaties not to contract any foreign alliance, without the reciprocal consent of the others; as for instance, Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden, by the alliance at Brunnen in 1315. But this depends upon particular treaties, and has no relation to the general union. In fact, every canton is  
restrained

auxiliary troops to foreign princes ; may prohibit the money of the other cantons from being current within their own territories ; may impose taxes, and, in short, perform every other act of absolute sovereignty.

The public affairs of the Helvetic body and their allies are discussed and determined in the several diets ; and these are,

1. General diets ; or general assemblies of the thirteen cantons, and of their allies.

2. Particular diets ; as those of the eight ancient cantons ; those of the Protestant cantons, with the deputies of the Protestants of Glarus and Appenzel, of the towns of St. Gallen, Bienne, and Mulhausen, called the *evangelical conferences* ; those of the Roman Catholic cantons, with the deputies of the Catholics of Glarus and Appenzel, of the abbot of St. Gallen, and of the republic of the Vallais, called the *golden alliance* ; as also the diets of particular cantons, which, beside being members of the general confederacy, have distinct and separate treaties with each other.

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restrained by the general articles of the Helvetic union : but, conforming to those, no one republic is, in any other instance, controlled by the resolutions of the majority among the confederate cantons.

The ordinary meetings of the *general* diet are held once a-year, and continue sitting one month; the extraordinary assemblies are summoned upon particular occasions. It is principally convened in order to deliberate upon the best measures for the security of the Helvetic body. The canton of Zurich appoints the time and place of meeting, and convenes the deputies by a circular letter. The deputy of Zurich also presides, unless the diet is held in the territory of any other canton; in that case, the deputy of that canton is president.

This diet formerly met at Baden; but since the conclusion of the civil war in 1712, between Zurich and Bern on one side, and Lucern, Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Zug, on the other, (when the five latter renounced the co-regency of Baden,) it has been assembled at \* Frauenfeld

\* Frauenfeld is no longer the scene of a free diet; in the French division of Switzerland it became the capital of the canton or department of Thurgau.

The last diet of FREE SWITZERLAND assembled at Arau in January 1798, and all the deputies, that of Basle excepted, which withdrew from the confederacy, took an oath to defend the Helvetic constitution to the last extremity. But this solemn appeal to heaven in defence of their liberties proved a mere ceremony, and produced no substantial effect.

in



in Thurgau. Each canton sends as many deputies as it thinks proper.

It would be descending into a tedious detail, to enter into the particular connections of the several allies, either with the whole Helvetic body, or with some of the cantons; and the different nature of these respective alliances. Suffer me only to remark, that the allies may be divided into *associate*, and *confederate* states: of the former are the abbot and town of St. Gallen, Bienne, and Mulhausen; of the latter, are the Grisons, the republic of the Vallais, Geneva, Neuchatel, and the bishop of Basle.

The states thus comprised under the general denomination of associates and confederates, enjoy, by virtue of this union, a total independence on all foreign dominion; and partake of all the privileges and immunities granted to the Swiss in other countries. And notwithstanding some of these states are allied only with particular cantons; yet if any of them should be attacked, those cantons with whom they are in treaty would not only supply them with succours, but would also require the joint assistance of the remaining cantons: if therefore any part of the whole body should be invaded, all the other members should unite in its defence, either

as immediate guarantees, or as auxiliaries of the actual guarantees \*.

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## LETTER 13.

*Route by Water from Zurich to Baden—Bridge of  
Wettingen—Baden—Castle of Hapsburgh.*

INSTEAD of following the usual route by land from Zurich to Basle, we proceeded the greater part of the way by water. We embarked about two in the afternoon on the Limmat. The navigation of that river has been described as extremely hazardous ; yet it is only dangerous upon the melting of the snow, or after violent rains, when in several places the rocks and shoals are covered with water. At other times there is no danger, provided the watermen are sober and experienced.

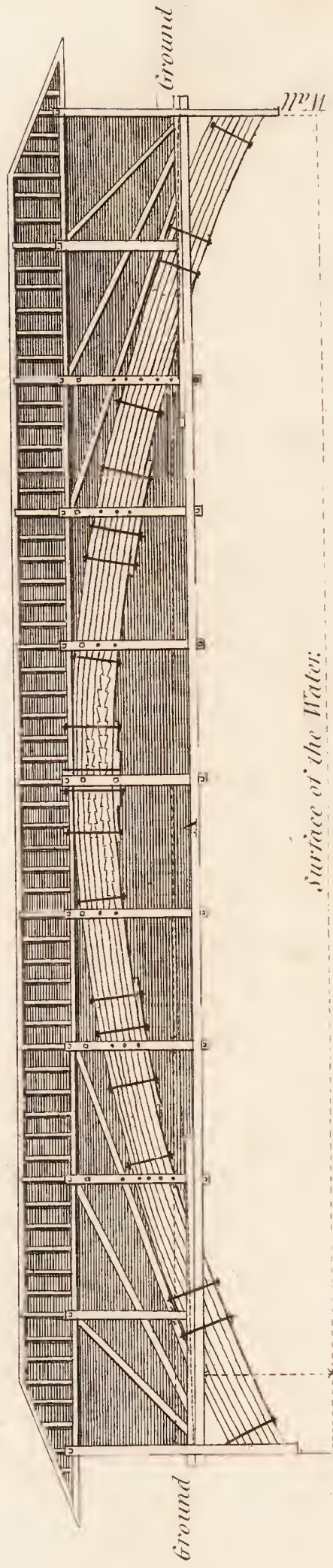
\* Such was the theory of the Helvetic Government, but unfortunately the practice did not accord with the theory. The Swiss states, instead of resisting in a compact body the aggression of the French, acted without concert or unanimity, and were compelled, one after the other, to dissolve their ancient confederacy.

Our





*Geometrical Elevation of the Timber Bridge,  
at Mettingen from actual measurements.*



*A. Floor of Bridge, raised 18 inches higher in the middle  
and gradually diminishing towards each end as  
shown by the dotted lines.*



Our boat was flat-bottomed and long, and was rowed, or rather steered by three watermen, who used their oars merely to direct the vessel; the stream being sufficiently rapid to carry us along at the rate of six, eight, and sometimes even ten miles in the hour. The water is beautifully transparent; and its surface was occasionally raised and agitated with high waves by a wind opposite to the current. The borders of the Limmat, at first somewhat flat, afterwards gently rose into hills clothed with pasture and wood, or divided into vineyards, were lastly quite perpendicular, and fringed to the water's edge with hanging trees.

About a mile from Baden, where the Limmat flows with the greatest rapidity, we shot under the bridge of Wettingen with such velocity, that in the moment of admiring its bold projection on one side, I imperceptibly found myself on the other. This beautiful piece of mechanism is a wooden bridge, two hundred and forty feet in length, and suspended above twenty feet from the surface of the water: it was the last work of Grubenman, the self-taught architect, and is far superior in elegance to that of Schaffhausen.

We landed at Baden, and walked to Hapf-burgh, Schintznach, Konigsfelden, and Windisch;

of which places I shall give you a short description.

Baden derives its name from the neighbouring warm baths, which are mentioned by the ancients under the names of *Aquæ* and *Thermæ Helveticæ*. It was a Roman fortress, erected to curb the *Allemanni* or Germans, and was raised, when the Helvetians, who supported Otho, were routed by Cæcina, general to Vitellius. Being rebuilt, it was taken by the Germans; fell afterwards under the dominion of the Franks; was, in the tenth century, incorporated in the German empire; and became successively subject to the dukes of Zæringen, to the counts of Kyburgh, and to Rhodolph of Hapsburgh. In 1418, when his descendant Frederic, duke of Austria, was put under the ban of the empire, the canton of Zurich took possession of the town and county; and, having purchased them from the emperor Sigismund, admitted to a joint share in the sovereignty, Lucern, Uri, Schwitz, Underwalden, and Zug, Bern in 1426, and Uri in 1445.

Baden continued a bailliage of these eight cantons until the year 1712, when the civil war breaking out between the Protestant and Catholic cantons, it was besieged and taken by the troops



troops of Zurich and Bern; and at the peace of Arau was ceded to those two cantons and Glarus, which, on account of its neutrality, preserved its right of joint-sovereignty. Zurich and Bern did not, however, prove their disinterestedness, when, not content with finally settling the religious disputes in favour of the Protestants, they exacted from the Catholic cantons the cession of Baden, contrary to the convention of Stantz, which forms the basis of the Helvetic constitution. The umbrage conceived by the Catholic cantons at this step was the principal inducement to conclude a perpetual alliance with France in 1715, and to throw themselves under the protection of that power. And this separate league has not been annulled by the general treaty which Louis XVI. contracted with the thirteen cantons in 1776. Until 1712, the diet assembled at Baden; but has been since transferred to Frauenfeld. The three cantons alternately appoint a bailif, who resides in the castle.

The inhabitants elect their own magistrates, and have their own judicial courts. In civil proceedings, an appeal lies to the bailif, and from his decision to the syndicate, composed of the deputies of the three cantons, and in the last resort to the three cantons themselves. In penal causes, the criminal court condemns, and the  
bailif

bailif enjoys the power of pardoning, or mitigating the sentence. The county or bailliage contains about 24,000 souls\*.

From Baden we walked through an agreeable and well-wooded country for some way along the side of the Limmat, whose steep banks are covered with vines to the edge of the water; and in about two hours crossed the Reufs into the canton of Bern. Having passed through a plain, we arrived at the baths of Schintznach, a place remarkable for its agreeable position on the banks of the Aar, and its tepid mineral waters. It is also well known as being the first place where the Helvetic society assembled. This society, formed by some of the most learned men in Switzerland, both of the Catholic and Reformed religion, first helped to extend the spirit of toleration, and to lessen that antipathy which subsisted between the members of the two persuasions. Its publications have tended to promote a general zeal for the diffusion of polite literature. The meeting of this liberal society is now transferred to Olten, a small town in the canton of Soleure.

Near Schintznach stands, on a lofty eminence, the ruins of the castle of Hapsburgh, to which

\* In the new division of Switzerland, the bailliage of Baden was converted into a canton or department, of which that town is the capital.

we ascended through a wood of beech, that seemed almost coëval with the date of the castle. The ruins consist of an ancient tower, constructed with massive stones, in a rude style of architecture, and part of a small building of much later date.

It was erected in the beginning of the eleventh century, by Werner, bishop of Strasburgh, came to his brothers Radebot and Latzelin, and devolved to their descendants. Otho, grandson of Radebot, was probably the first person upon record who styled himself Count of Hapsburgh, and it continued to be the principal title by which his posterity was distinguished, until it was lost in a greater dignity, when Rhodolph of Hapsburgh was elevated to the imperial throne. His successors granted the castle and its dependencies as a fief, first to the lords of Wildeck, and afterwards to the lord of Wolen: in 1415 it was occupied by Bern, during the contest between the emperor Sigismund and Frederic of Austria, and given to the family of Segefern of Bruneck. In 1469, it was sold to the convent of Konigsfelden; on the dissolution of that monastery, at the reformation, was secularised, and seized by government; has gradually gone to decay, and is now inhabited by a peasant's family.

This



This castle commands an unbounded view over hills and dales, plains and forests, rivers and lakes, towns and villages, mountains and alps; emblem of that extent of power to which the talents of *one man*, who derived his title from this castle, raised himself and his descendants. You will readily perceive I allude to Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, who, from a simple baron of Switzerland, became emperor, and founded the House of Austria.

Rhodolph was born in 1218. Having signalized his youth in constant scenes of warfare and contention, he was, in 1273, unexpectedly raised to the dignity of emperor, and conferred honour on that exalted station, no less by his political sagacity than by his military prowess. He died in 1291, after a long and glorious reign, and in the seventy-third year of his age.

Impressed with these ideas, as I considered, on the very spot, the origin of the House of Hapsburgh, and its gradual progress towards that height of power which it has since attained under the more distinguished appellation of the House of Austria; I compared it to a small rill in the Alps, whose source is uncertain, which, having received several streams, forms no inconsiderable river. Flowing through Switzerland, still almost  
unknown

unknown to its neighbours, it no sooner enters Germany, than it loses its name by its junction with the Danube; and, having collected the tribute of numberless rivers, rolls, with accumulated and still increasing waters, through a large extent of country, and falls by a hundred mouths into the Euxine Sea;

——— *et pare*

*Che guerra porta e non tributo al mare* \*.

Rhodolph, during his residence in this castle, would not have given credit to a person endowed with the spirit of prophecy, who should have informed him, that, in little more than a century, a few small republics would drive his descendants from their hereditary dominions in Switzerland, and erect upon their ruins, and on the basis of equal liberty, a formidable confederacy, which would be courted by the most powerful sovereigns. Still less perhaps would he have believed, that he himself should possess the imperial throne; that his lineal descendants should rule over Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Austria, Spain, Burgundy, the Low Countries, Milan, Naples, and Sicily, and extend their dominion and influence from the shores of the Euxine to the New World beyond the Atlantic.

\* Tasso.

## LETTER 14.

*Konigsfelden—Windisch—Voyage down the Rhine.*

HAVING gratified our curiosity at the castle of Hapsburgh\*, that cradle of the House of Austria, which still confers a title on the present emperor of Germany, we descended into the plain of Konigsfelden, to a convent of the same name, built by Elizabeth, on the spot where her husband the emperor Albert was assassinated. Albert, as guardian to his nephew John of Hapsburgh, had taken possession of his hereditary dominions in Switzerland, and refused, under various pretences, to deliver them up to him. Wearied with repeated and fruitless solicitations, John entered into a conspiracy against the emperor, with Rhodolph

\* There is also a castle of Hapsburgh, situated near the lake of Lucern, which I visited in 1779. Some authors have erroneously asserted, that this was the castle from which the counts derived their titles. But Hergot has refuted this opinion; and unquestionably proved that honour to be due to the castle of Hapsburgh which I have described in the preceding letter. See Hergot, Gen. Dipl. Augf. Domus Habfb.



de Warth, Ulric de Palme, Walther de Eschenbach, and Conrad de Tagerfeld.

The emperor dined at Baden, in his way to Rheinfelden, a town in the circle of Suabia, where the emperor's consort had collected a considerable body of troops, for the purpose of invading the three cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, which had revolted against him. Contemporary historians, who have recorded the minutest circumstances in this whole transaction, relate, that Albert was in high spirits during the repast; and that, his nephew again entreating to be put into possession of his hereditary dominions, the emperor, with an air of banter, placed a garland upon his head, adding, at the same time, "This will be more suitable to you, for the present, than the cares of a troublesome government." This taunt so deeply affected the young prince, that he burst into tears, flung away the flowers, and could not be prevailed upon to sit down to table.

After dinner, Albert continued his journey on horseback, accompanied by his son Leopold, the conspirators, and his usual attendants; and came near the town of Windisch, in the canton of Bern, to the Reuss, over which river pas-

fengers were usually ferried upon a raft. The conspirators first passed over, and were followed by Albert : as he was riding gently on, expecting Leopold and the remainder of his suite, he was suddenly beset by the assassins. One of them having seized his horse's bridle, John of Hapsburgh reproached him for his injustice in detaining his dominions, and struck him on the neck with his sword : Rhodolph de Warth wounded him in the side, and Ulric de Palme clove his head with a sabre. In this condition they left him expiring upon the ground.

This assassination was perpetrated the first of May 1308, in the open day, and in the sight of his son and the rest of his suite, who had not as yet passed the river, and who, though spectators of the murder, yet could not assist the emperor. The field lies between the Aar and the Reufs, not far from the junction of those two rivers ; and the very spot, where he was massacred, is marked by a convent, erected by his wife Elizabeth and his daughter Agnes : the place was called *Konigsfelden* or King's field ; a name it retains to this day. The remains of the emperor were buried in the convent of Witterling, from whence they were afterwards transported to Spire, and there interred.

The assassins escaped into the cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Underwalden, expecting to find a sure asylum in a nation which Albert was preparing to invade. But the generous natives, detesting a crime of so atrocious a nature, although committed upon the person of their greatest and most formidable enemy, refused to protect the murderers. D'Eschenbach concealed himself in the disguise of a common labourer during thirty years, nor was his rank discovered till he confessed it upon his death-bed; De Palme, destitute of common necessaries, died in extreme poverty; De Warth, tied to a horse's tail, like a common malefactor, and dragged to the place of execution, was broken upon the wheel. John of Hapsburgh, commonly known by the appellation of *parricide*, did not reap the expected benefits of the crime; for, by order of the emperor Henry the Seventh, he retired into a monastery of Augustine friars, where he died in 1313.

The widow of Albert turned her whole thoughts towards revenging the death of her husband, and in this pursuit involved the innocent as well as the guilty; all, who had the smallest connexion with the assassins, being sacrificed with undistinguished cruelty. Meanwhile the three cantons were, for a few years, left to the undisturbed enjoyment of their



liberties, and to strengthen themselves against any future attack; and thus they innocently reaped the sole advantage which was derived from this assassination.

The convent or abbey of Konigsfelden comprised within its extensive precincts, a nunnery of the order of St. Clare, and a monastery of monks of the order of minorites, separated from each other by a wall. It was richly endowed by Elizabeth, her five sons, and her daughter Agnes queen of Hungary, who assumed the habit of a nun, and here passed the remainder of her days. At the reformation the abbey was secularized, and its lands appropriated by government: part of the building became the residence of the bailif, part was converted into an hospital, and part was suffered to fall to ruin. Many of the cells, formerly occupied by the nuns, still exist in their original state; and one, in particular, is distinguished as the habitation in which queen Agnes lived and died.

The chapel still remains entire, but is no longer used for divine service. The glass windows are beautifully coloured, and painted with various histories of the Old Testament; with the portraits of Elizabeth and Agnes, of the emperor Albert, and his sons. On the walls  
are

are coarsely represented the figures of Leopold duke of Austria, and the principal nobles who perished at the battle of Sempach. Elizabeth and Agnes, and several princes and princesses of the House of Austria, were buried in this chapel; but their bones were a few years ago removed to the abbey of St. Blaise, in the Black Forest, where they were deposited with great pomp, and magnificent sepulchres erected to their memory.

Near Konigsfelden is the small village of Windisch, standing at the conflux of the Aar and the Reuss, and supposed by antiquarians to occupy the site of *Vindonissa*, a Roman fortress mentioned by Tacitus. In traversing the place I did not observe the least signs of any antiquities; but various lapidary inscriptions, mile-stones, sepulchral urns, medals, coins, and gems, which have been found in great abundance, sufficiently prove, that it must have been the station of a large Roman colony. The reader, who is inclined to reflect on the vicissitudes of human possessions, will recollect with pleasure the following quotation: “ Within the antient walls of Vindonissa, “ the castle of Hapsburgh, the abbey of Konigsfeld, and the town of Bruck, have successively “ arisen. The philosophic traveller may com- “ pare the monuments of Roman conquest, of

“ feudal or Austrian tyranny, of monkish super-  
“ stition, and of industrious freedom. If he be  
“ truly a philosopher, he will applaud the merit  
“ and happiness of his own time\*.”

Early the next morning we embarked on the Aar, which, though here a trifling stream, yet, being considerably swelled by the tribute of waters from the Reuss and the Limmat, soon becomes a considerable river. Its banks are agreeably enlivened with meadows and woods, and spotted occasionally with villages, castles, and ruins, hanging on the water's edge. Having made a small turn, it falls by a strait channel into the Rhine, vying in size and rapidity with the great river in which it loses its name: its waters, which are of a silvery hue, are for a long way distinguished from those of the Rhine; which, being transparent, and of a sea-green colour, seem to disdain the union.

The banks of the Rhine are far superior in wildness and beauty to those of the Aar, in many parts rising perpendicularly, yet feathered with wood; in others sloping in gentle declivities, richly bordered with vines, forest, and pastures; and exhibiting a continual succession of towns and villages. The rapid stream carried us above

\* Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. iii. p. 563.



eighteen miles in three hours, and we landed at Lauffenburgh, where the Rhine forms a cataract, which, though greatly inferior to the fall of the same river near Schaffhausen, yet deserves to be visited by travellers for the beauties of the scenery. As I stood upon the crags of the northern shore, the principal objects were, a high bridge, partly open and partly covered, supported by three lofty stone piers; on the south a row of houses, with an old ruined castle on a summit, boldly overhanging the water; a perspective of woods and meadows under the arcades of the bridge; and the river dashing over its craggy bed, in a sloping cataract, until it is suddenly lost among the rocks which close the view.

About half a mile below this fall we re-embarked, and found the waters in many parts more agitated than those of the Limmat; particularly near Rheinfelden, where they rush with such increasing velocity, that they were troubled like the waves of the sea, and, beating against the boat, turned it obliquely by their violence. Here we were hurried along with such rapidity, that though I had a pencil in my hand, I had no time for observation, much less for description; I could only catch a general glance of the romantic scenery, as we passed under a pic-

tureſque bridge of ſeveral arches, ſuſpended high above the ſurface of the river, and joined to a ſteep rock, on which towered ſome majestic ruins. In many parts, and for a conſiderable way, our veſſel paſſed within a few inches of the ſhelving rocks, and was only prevented from ſtriking them by the dexterity of the pilot.

As we approached Baſle, the ſtream became leſs rapid ; and we diſembarked, highly delighted with our expedition.

## LETTER 15.

*The Town of Baſle—Erasmus—Library—Holbein.*

I ARRIVED at Baſle or Baſil, I ſuppoſed, about twelve at noon ; but was much ſurprized to find, that all the clocks \* actually ſtruck one : and, on inquiry, I was informed, that they conſtantly go an hour faſter than the real time.

\* The clocks of Baſle, as well as the government, have undergone a revolutionary change in the new order of things. The motion for altering the clocks according to the real time was made by M. de Mechel.

Different

Different reasons have been assigned for this singularity : some assert, that it was first practised during the council of Basle, in order to assemble, at an earlier hour, the cardinals and bishops, who, being lazy and indolent, always arrived late. Others maintain, that a conspiracy being formed to assassinate the magistrates at midnight, one of the burgomasters, who had notice of the design, advanced the town-clock an hour ; by which means the conspirators, imagining they had missed the appointed time, retired ; and that the clocks are still kept in the same advanced state, as a perpetual memorial of this happy deliverance. But there is a third reason given for this strange custom, which seems the most probable. It is well known that the choirs of cathedrals are constructed towards the east : that of Basle declines somewhat from this direction ; and the sun-dial, which is placed upon the outside of the choir, and by which the town-clock is always regulated, partakes of this declination ; a circumstance which, according to the celebrated Bernoulli, occasions a variation from the true time of about five and forty minutes.

The inhabitants of Basle are still so strongly attached to this whimsical custom, that, although it has been often proposed in the sovereign council



cil to regulate their clocks properly, yet the motion has been invariably rejected; and the people would suspect that their liberties were invaded, if their clocks agreed with those of the rest of Europe. A few years since, several leading men of the town determined to alter the hand of the sun-dial half a minute a day, until the shadow should imperceptibly point to the true hour. This expedient was accordingly practised, and the clock had already lost near three quarters of an hour, when an accident discovered the design: the magistrates were accordingly compelled to place the hand of the sun-dial in its former position, and to regulate the hours as usual. Indeed, long-established customs, however indifferent or ridiculous, are apt to make so strong an impression upon vulgar minds, as to become sometimes dangerous, and always difficult to be abolished; especially among a people, like those of this country, who are averse to any change, even in the minutest articles. I need not remind you, how long it was before the English could be persuaded to reckon their years according to the general mode of computation in Europe.

Basle is beautifully situated upon the banks of the Rhine, near the point where that river, which is here broad, deep, and rapid, after  
flowing

flowing for some way from east to west, turns suddenly to the north. It consists of two towns joined together by a long bridge; the Large Town lies on the side of Switzerland, and the Small Town on the opposite banks of the river. It stands very favourably for commerce; an advantage which the inhabitants have by no means neglected; for they have established a great variety of manufactures, particularly of ribands and cottons; and an extensive trade is carried on by the principal merchants.

The cathedral is an elegant gothic building, but strangely disfigured by a daubing of rose-coloured paint. It contains the ashes of Gertrude Anne countess of Hohenburgh, wife of the emperor Rhodolph I. who died at Vienna, in 1281, and her body was conveyed to Basle. Her two christian names gave rise to much confusion, and led many historians to conclude that Gertrude and Anne were two different personages, and successive wives of that emperor; while others ridiculously supposed that both were married to him at the same time; nor were these erroneous opinions confuted, and the controversy finally settled, till Hergot, the laborious genealogist\* of the House of Austria,

\* See Hergottii Geneal. Diplom. Dom. Aust. vol. i. p. 125.

proved,

proved, from the most unquestionable authorities of ancient diplomes, the identity of this divided personage ; and that the mistake arose from her being uniformly styled Gertrude before her coronation, and Anne after the performance of that ceremony. She bore to her husband fourteen children ; and though the mother of so large a family, yet such was her extreme sensibility, that the grief which she suffered at the departure of her daughter Clementina to Naples, on her marriage with Charles Martel, hurried her to her grave.

In the same church are deposited, under a marble tomb, the venerable remains of the great Erasmus. That distinguished writer joined to superior learning, and a peculiar elegance of style, the keenest wit, which he pointed, not only against the vices and ignorance of the monks, but the general corruptions and disorders of the Roman church. He was indeed the forerunner of Luther, in his first attacks upon the Catholics, respecting the sale of indulgences : but afterwards, when the controversy appeared more serious, and an open breach with the church of Rome seemed inevitable, he condemned the proceedings of that bold reformer. He considered them, indeed, as altogether unwarrantable ; and, although he had himself censured and  
exposed



exposed the corruptions that infected the Catholic religion ; yet he zealously inculcated submissive obedience to the decrees of what he called the “ universal church.” Agreeably to these sentiments, he advised the protestants to endeavour at obtaining, by mild and patient measures, what they might indiscreetly lose by a warmer and more violent opposition.

Such temperate counsels were ill suited to the daring and impetuous spirit of Luther. Accordingly, while Erasmus was acting the part of a mediator, and endeavouring to moderate and allay the flame on each side, he drew upon himself the displeasure of both parties : in allusion to this temporising conduct, one of his adversaries applied to him, not unaptly, that line in Virgil,

*Terras inter cælumque volabat.*

The impartial truth seems to be, that he was by no means disposed to become a martyr in the cause : the natural timidity of his temper, a too great deference to persons of superior rank and power, and perhaps the fear of losing his pensions, induced him to take a decided part against the reformers, and condemn their separation from the church of Rome.

But

But it would be uncandid to impute his conduct wholly to selfish considerations : something may fairly be ascribed to the powerful impressions of early prejudices ; and something to that rooted love of peace and studious tranquillity, which seems to have been the spring of all his actions. But, whatever imperfections may be discovered in some particular parts of his character, his memory must be revered by every friend of genius, learning, and moderation. Liveliness of imagination, depth and variety of erudition, together with great sagacity of judgment, were in him eminently united. He infused a spirit of elegance even into theological controversies ; and contributed to disencumber literature from that scholastic jargon with which it was disgraced. Erasmus reflected much honour upon this town, by choosing it as the favourite place of his residence, and publishing from hence the greatest part of his valuable works. In the public library are preserved, with great veneration, his hanger and seal, several of his letters, and his last testament, written with his own hand.

The university of Basle was formerly eminent in the literary history of Europe. Who, in the least conversant in letters, is unacquainted with the celebrated names of Oecolampadius, Amerbach,

bach, the three Bauhins, Grynæus, Buxtorf, Wetstein, Iselin, the Bernoullis, and Euler. If it has fallen from its pristine state of renown, its decline must be principally imputed to the casual mode of electing the professors; but it still boasts several members who do honour to their native town by their learning and abilities.

The public library contains a small collection of books, remarkable for several rare and valuable editions; particularly of those printed in the fifteenth century. The most curious manuscripts are numerous letters of the first reformers, and of other learned men in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; and an account of the proceedings at the council of Basle. The minutes of that council were taken by John of Segovia; and are supposed to be the same which are preserved either in the library, or in the archives of the town: the former is written on paper, the latter on parchment. A question has arisen which of these is the original. Some conclude in favour of that in the archives, on account of the many false readings and mistakes in the other, which are plainly the faults of a copyist. Others give the preference to that in the library, because it is written in different hands, and with different  
ink,



ink, which seem to imply that it was noted down at various intervals, according as the acts of the council were passed ; whereas that in the archives, being penned on parchment, in the same hand, and with the same ink, was probably copied from the original minutes ; for who, it is urged, would take minutes on parchment ? A third opinion, still more probable, is, that neither of these is the original. Several passages are wanting in both ; which omission may have proceeded from the transcriber's not being able to read every part of the original. It is probable that John of Segovia took away the minutes, and deposited them at Rome ; and that one of these manuscripts was the copy transcribed by order of the council ; of these, the manuscript on parchment appears to be the most authentic.

In a suite of rooms belonging to this library, is a cabinet of petrifications, collected in the canton of Basle by the Rev. Mr. Annoni : some ancient medals and gems ; a few antiquities found at Augst ; a large number of prints ; and some fine drawings and paintings, consisting chiefly of originals by Holbein, who was a native of this town. These pictures are, most of them, in the highest preservation : the connoisseur can here trace all the different manners  
of

of Holbein, and compare the productions of his youth with those of his maturer age. A few are preserved, which he painted before he had reached his sixteenth year; and one extremely curious, which he drew upon a sign for a writing-master. The portraits of himself, his wife, and children, in the same group, are much admired for nature and simplicity of expression. The most valuable of these paintings is an altar-piece, in eight compartments, which represents the passion of our Saviour: a performance, in which this admirable artist has carried to the highest perfection that singular brilliancy of colouring so peculiar to his best compositions. I was much struck with a profile of his friend and patron Erasmus, writing his commentary upon St. Matthew: there is a spirit and animation in the countenance, finely expressive of his sagacious and penetrating talents.

Among the works of Holbein, that discover the liveliness of his fancy, must be mentioned the sketches he drew on the margin of the *Eulogium of Folly* by Erasmus, which he received as a present from the author. This curious volume is preserved in the library, and has been lately published by Mr. Haas, in French, Latin, and German, with fac-similes of the original designs, engraved on wood.



The dance of death, in the church-yard of the predicants of the suburbs of St. John, is frequently shewn to strangers as being of Holbein's pencil. It is painted in oil-colours upon a wall which encloses the burial-ground: but, as it has several times been retouched, no traces are discoverable of that great master's hand. In fact, the Hon. Horace Walpole, and other unquestionable judges, have proved, that this performance was painted before Holbein was born, and that he was not employed even in retouching it. It is probable however, that, from this ancient painting, he took the first hint towards composing his famous drawings on the dance of death. In treating that subject, he has displayed such richness of imagination, and discovered so much judgment in the disposition, and so much spirit in the execution of the figures, that Rubens studied them with particular attention, and took drawings from them.

The originals of Holbein's dance of death were purchased by Mr. Fleischman of Strasbourg, at the sale of the famous collection of Crozat, at Paris; of which Mariette has published a catalogue. They are now in the possession of prince Gallitzin, minister from the empress of Russia to the court of Vienna. They consist of forty-four small drawings: the outlines are sketched with a pen,



pen, and they are slightly shaded with Indian ink. I had frequent opportunities of seeing them, during my continuance at Vienna, and particularly admired the variety of attitudes and characters in which death is represented.

Prints have been taken from some of these drawings by Hollar, which are very scarce. Mr. de Mechel, a celebrated artist of this place, has already engraved them after the original designs; a work which cannot fail of being highly acceptable to the admirers of the fine arts; he has added four engravings, which are not in the prince's collection, and which are taken from the prints of Hollar. He ingeniously conjectures, from the dresses and characters of several of the figures in the dance of death, that the author sketched them while he was in England. They were, probably, in the Arundelian collection when Hollar engraved them.

Mr. de Mechel has finished also a set of prints from the fine paintings of the Duffeldorf gallery, and likewise engravings of the famous Hedlinger's medals. This able artist has a small but well-chosen collection of paintings; and his magazine of prints (in which article he carries on a very considerable trade) is perhaps one of the largest and most complete in Europe. I am acquainted with no person to whom the curious traveller

can address himself with greater advantage than to Mr. de Mechel, nor from whom he can receive more useful information. To a particular knowledge of the physical beauties of Switzerland, he joins a thorough acquaintance with the different governments, customs, and manners of the several cantons. As he is intimately connected with the principal men of learning in this country, his letters of recommendation are the most desirable, and the most beneficial, that can be procured, and he enjoys as much satisfaction in conferring, as can be received by accepting, his good offices. He indeed possesses a great fund of good humour, an amiable frankness of disposition, and a certain originality of manner, which, together with his other valuable qualities, recommend him as a no less pleasing than useful acquaintance.

I visited also the small but pleasing collection of pictures, mostly of the Flemish and Dutch schools, belonging to M. Faesch, member of the Great Council. In the court-yard before his house is a wooden statue of Rhodolph I. sitting on a throne, and clothed with the imperial insignia: underneath I observed the date of 1273, the æra of his coronation. The rudeness of the sculpture renders it probable that it is an original of that great emperor, who was besieging

ing Basle when he received the unexpected news of his election. The gates were immediately thrown open; and he was instantly admitted as a friend into that town, which had shut its gates against him as their enemy. On this occasion he resided a short time at Basle, and, as tradition relates, in this very house.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER 16.

### *Government of Basle.*

**T**HE bishops of Basle once possessed the sovereignty over the city and canton; but were gradually deprived of their prerogatives; and, in 1501, finally quitted this town, when the canton joined the Helvetic confederacy. They retired at first to Friburgh in Brisgau; and afterwards, establishing their residence at Porentru, entirely lost the trifling authority and inconsiderable prerogatives which remained to them. Upon the introduction of the reformation in 1525, the constitution was in some mea-



ture changed ; and the power of the aristocracy limited.

It would seem in theory scarcely possible to divide the aristocratical and democratical commonwealths into so many different species as exist in Switzerland : for, in this country, every republic has its peculiar modification ; and there is none more singular than that of Basle. To view the general outlines of the constitution, it has the appearance of an absolute aristocracy \* ; but, upon considering it in detail, it will be found to incline towards a democracy. The supreme legislative power resides in the Great and Little Councils, consisting of about three hundred members : and the authority of these two councils combined, is without controul. They enact laws, declare war and peace, contract alliances, and impose taxes : they elect the several magistrates, appoint their own members, nomi-

\* An aristocracy (strictly speaking) means that form of government, which places the supreme power in the nobles, exclusively of the people ; but here I mean by it, the confining of the sovereign authority to a certain limited number of persons, without considering whether they are patricians or plebeians, nobles or commons : for at Basle every citizen who is noble, and who chooses to retain his title of nobility, is incapable of being elected a member of the sovereign council.

nate

nate to all employments, and confer the right of burghership. The general administration of government is committed by the Great Council to the Senate, or Little Council; that is, to a part of its own body. This Senate, composed of sixty members, together with the four chiefs of the republic, two burgomasters, and two great tribunes, is divided into two bodies, which act by rotation. The acting division continues in office one year, decides finally in all criminal causes, superintends the police, and exercises several other powers subordinate to the Sovereign Council. The collective body of citizens assembles only once a year; when the magistrates publicly take an oath to maintain the constitution, and preserve the liberties and immunities of the people, inviolate. The reciprocal oath of obedience to the laws, is administered to the citizens in their respective tribes.

But, notwithstanding the boundless prerogatives of the Great Council; yet the meanest citizen is legally capable of being admitted into that body, and, by the singular method of election, may possibly be chosen. For the vacancies in the two councils are supplied from all ranks of citizens, one class only excepted, the members of the university. These citizens are divided into eighteen tribes,

called in German *Zuenfte*; fifteen of which belong to the larger town, and three to the smaller; each of the first-mentioned fifteen tribes, returns four members to the Senate, and each of the whole eighteen sends twelve to the Great Council. Formerly these elections were determined by a plurality of voices; but, as by these means the richest person was always certain of being chosen, a *ternaire* was established in 1718; that is, three candidates were nominated, and from these the successor was appointed\* by lot.

Although this mode of election in some measure put a stop to corruption; yet it was not sufficient to counteract entirely the influence of the wealthy: and, as the poorer citizens could seldom succeed to the most honourable or lucrative employments, they procured an act to be passed in 1740, changing the *ternaire* into a *senaire*; by which six candidates, instead of

\* The fifteen tribes in the great town are called *Zuenfte*, and the three in the small town *Gesellschaftten*, or companies. It may also be remarked, that the citizens of the small town enjoy more advantages than those of the great town; inasmuch as the former may be appointed to public employments either in the tribes or in the companies; whereas a citizen of the great town cannot be admitted into the companies, unless he resides in the small town.



three, were put in nomination, and drew lots for the charge. Six tickets, containing the names of the respective candidates, and separately placed in silver eggs, are inserted into one bag; and the same number of tickets, five of which are blanks, and one is marked with the vacant employment, are placed in another. The reigning burgomaster and the great tribune, appointed to be the drawers of this *official* lottery, both at the same instant take a ticket from each bag; and the candidate whose name comes out at the same time with the ticket on which the employment is written, obtains the post.

It would be too tedious, and indeed too uninteresting, a detail, to enter into a minute account of the forms and circumstances requisite to be observed in selecting the several candidates. To give, however, some general idea of this matter: Upon a vacancy in the Great Council, for instance, the six candidates must be taken from the citizens of that tribe, to which the person who occasioned the vacancy belonged, and be nominated by such of the members of the Great and Little Councils, as are of the same tribe. The candidates for the senate and for the tribunes or chiefs of each tribe, called in  
German

German *meister*, are appointed by the Great Council. But there is one case, in which the *senaire* is not practised: for, upon the death of a burgomaster, his colleague, who is the great tribune, succeeds of course.

It should seem, that many inconveniences must flow from this absurd method of supplying vacant posts in the government; as they are left entirely to the capricious disposal of fortune. In fact, it has not unfrequently happened, that a candidate, whose knowledge and abilities rendered him capable of being serviceable to the state, has never obtained the successful ticket; while chance has bestowed it upon another by no means qualified to fulfil the duties of the employment. However, notwithstanding the ill effects resulting from this casual mode of election, the management of public affairs is in general well conducted; and there are few instances of civil justice unwisely administered, or of innocence sacrificed to wealth or power.

But the counsellors of state and magistrates are not the only persons chosen by lot; even the professors in the university are elected in the same manner. The three candidates (for in this instance the *ternaire* is still in use) must be nominated from those who have  
taken

taken the degree of doctor. Hence a candidate not unfrequently offers himself for the professorship of a science which he has never made the peculiar object of his studies, if the chair of that particular branch of literature in which he excels is already occupied; for, under these circumstances, the respective unqualified professors change places with each other. Thus (to mention an instance from a family well known) John Bernoulli, the famous mathematical professor in this university, who died in 1748, left three sons, Nicholas, Daniel, and John, all justly celebrated for their skill in that science, in which their father and uncle so eminently excelled. Nicholas died at St. Petersburg, member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences; and Daniel, having followed his brother into Russia, returned to Basle on obtaining the professorship of anatomy, which he afterwards had an opportunity of happily exchanging for that of natural philosophy; he died in 1782. A similar circumstance happened to the third son John: after being several times an unsuccessful candidate in the lottery of professorships, chance at length conferred on him the chair of *rhetoric*, for which he was wholly unfit; but, upon his father's death,



death, he changed with Mr. Rumspeck, to whom fortune had assigned the professorship of mathematics \*.

The sumptuary laws are very strict at Basle. The use of coaches in the town is not indeed prohibited, as at Zurich; but, what is more singular, no citizen or inhabitant is allowed to have a servant behind his carriage. Laws of this kind may be carried, in some instances,

\* The following curious epitaph on a lawyer, interred in the cathedral, complains that the deceased, notwithstanding his advanced age of 84, which had afforded many opportunities of being nominated candidate for various offices of state, had been continually excluded by fortune.

S : E : S :

Locum quo Sepeliretur

de suo acquisivit

JOH: GEORG: SCHWEIGHAUSER

J. U. L. Ducentum Vir

Fori judicarii et Appellationis

ultra XL. Annos assiduus Assessor

*muneribus autem Academicis*

*et publicis Officiis*

*Sorte constanter exclusus*

vixit tamen et vivere desiit

ut Virum Honestum decet

natus Mense Januario 1695.

Obiit Die VII Mensis Junii 1779.

H. M. H. P.

to a scrupulous and even ridiculous minuteness ; upon the whole, however, they are excellent regulations, and not only useful but necessary in a small republic. They have certainly operated with great advantage in this town : for, although it contains several families who are considerably rich, yet a happy simplicity of manners is still so predominant, that you would smile, if I were to particularise those articles which pass under the opprobrious denomination of *luxury*.

The lower ranks of citizens are in general so strongly prejudiced in favour of their own country, as to seem convinced that true felicity is only to be found at Basle ; and indeed that class of people are in no part of the world more happy. Every person boasts that he is free, and is so in reality ; and as the citizens not only possess very considerable privileges, but each individual may also indulge the hope of being one day chosen into the sovereign council ; he enjoys a certain degree of respect and consideration extremely flattering to his self-importance. In fact, several of the magistrates exercise the meaner trades ; and the present treasurer, whose name is Muench, is a baker : he is indeed a person of distinguished knowledge

knowledge and merit, and has been twice appointed one of the candidates for the office of great tribune; which, had fortune favoured him, would have been followed, on the next vacancy, by his succession to the office of burgomaster. In general the burghers' sons receive an excellent education: they always learn the Latin, and not unfrequently the Greek tongue; and it is by no means unusual, even for the lower sort of tradesmen, to employ their leisure hours in the perusal of Horace, Virgil, and Plutarch.

The conduct of magistrates is nowhere more freely, nor more severely, criticised than at Basle. The people may sometimes, no doubt, extend this privilege beyond its proper limits; but they can never be totally restrained from exercising it, without striking at the vitals of their liberty: it is essential to its existence, and no free government can long survive its extinction.

Basle is the largest, and seems formerly to have been one of the most populous towns in Switzerland: its extent is capable of containing above a hundred thousand inhabitants; whereas it can scarcely number more than fourteen thousand. Many particular causes may have concurred to  
occasion



occasion this remarkable decrease; but I will mention only one or two to which it may be attributed.

It is proved, from undoubted calculations, that, in all great cities, the number of burials exceeds that of births; consequently, unless this unequal proportion is compensated by a constant accession of new inhabitants, in process of time every great town must necessarily become depopulated. Now the citizens of Basle are so jealous of the burghership, and pride themselves so much upon the privileges which accompany it, that they seldom deign to confer it upon foreigners: a supply therefore to balance that gradual waste of people I have mentioned, can never be derived from an influx of strangers, who are not permitted to carry on commerce, or to follow any trade. A few years ago, some of the magistrates, sensible of the impolicy of this prohibition, procured a law, by which the freedom of the town and the right of burghership was allowed to be conferred upon strangers; but it was clogged with so many restrictions, as by no means to answer the purpose for which it was intended. Every principle, indeed, of private interest and ambition, concurred to prevent its efficacy: and, no wonder; for bodies of men are seldom actuated  
by

by so generous a spirit as to sacrifice their personal and immediate advantages to the future welfare and prosperity of their country \*.

I am, &c.

\* Basle was the first canton which separated from the old Helvetic confederacy, and adopted the new constitution fabricated in France. Its situation near the frontiers exposed it to the intrigues of the French agents, and without foreign support rendered it incapable of resistance. The peasants of the canton were likewise dissatisfied with the monopoly of power and commerce vested in the burghers of the town; encouraged by the French, and excited by their own turbulent demagogues, they peremptorily required emancipation and independence. The magistrates could only lament in secret the progress of disaffection, and were compelled to submit without a struggle; the French having over-run the bishopric of Basle, and annexed it to their own dominions, claimed the episcopal palace as succeeding to the rights of the bishop, and under that pretence introduced a corps of troops into the town.

The progress of the revolution in this canton was almost instantaneous: the peasants rose in different districts, demolished the castles of the bailiffs, planted on the 18th of January, at Liechstatt, the first tree of liberty, and sent deputies to Basle with their declaration of rights, which they styled Magna Charta. The magistrates acceded to their demands, admitted 600 militia into the town, and recalled their deputies from Arau. On the 24th the tree of liberty was planted at Basle, and on the 5th of February the old magistrates resigned their authority, and sixty delegates, appointed

by

## LETTER 17.

*Combat at the Hospital of St. James, between the Forces of Louis Dauphin of France, and a Corps of Swiss Troops—Ruins of Augst—Mulhausen.*

CURIOSITY led me, during my continuance at Basle, to visit the hospital and burying-ground of St. James, not far from the town, and near the small river Birs, celebrated for a desperate combat, in 1444, between the Swiss and the dauphin of France, afterwards Louis the Eleventh: never was Swiss valour and intrepidity so signally displayed, as by a few battalions of their troops on that memorable day.

This famous battle was fought in consequence of some disputes which arose between the canton

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by the people, were invested with a provisional government, until the new constitution should be consolidated. Thus the magistrates of Basle were first compelled to set the fatal example of a separation from the Helvetic Union; an example which was soon followed by the other parts of the confederacy.



of Zurich and those of Schweitz and Glarus. Zurich refusing to abide by the mediation of the five neutral cantons, who had decided in favour of Schweitz and Glarus, a civil war ensued: upon which occasion Zurich formed an alliance with the emperor Frederic the Third. The seven antient cantons, in order to obtain a renunciation of this alliance, which they justly considered as an infringement of their league, laid siege to that town. Frederic, unable to send a sufficient body of troops to its relief, applied for additional succours to Charles the Seventh, king of France; who, as well with a view of dissolving the council of Basle, as for the particular purpose required, ordered a considerable army to march, under the command of his son Louis. Accordingly the dauphin entered with his forces into Alsace; and, after laying waste and harassing the adjacent provinces, appeared before Basle. Upon this occasion, a detachment of fifteen hundred Swiss from the army of the confederates (at that time employed in besieging Farnspurg) were ordered to throw themselves into the town of Basle, which was but slightly garrisoned.

This handful of men advanced without interruption to the plain of Brattelen; where they charged, with such determined and well-conducted

ducted valour, eight thousand of the enemy's cavalry, as to drive them back to Muttenez; at which place the repulsed were joined by another corps; but, notwithstanding this reinforcement, the Swifs renewing the assault with fresh intrepidity, forced them to repass the river Birs; where the main body of the army was chiefly drawn up. Such was the firmness and solidity of the Swifs in these several encounters, that, to use the expression of an old French chronicle, when the cavalry charged "they could make no more impression, than if they had attacked a rock, or an impenetrable wall." The Swifs, encouraged by this wonderful success, and exasperated with the most spirited indignation against the invaders of their country, disregarded the remonstrances of their officers, and rashly attempted to force their passage over a bridge, which was guarded by a large body of the enemy: but this effort of inconsiderate valour proving ineffectual, these gallant soldiers, throwing themselves into the river, gained the opposite shore, in the face of a battery of cannon that was playing against them.

What could the desperate courage of so small a number avail, against an army of thirty thousand men advantageously posted in an open plain? They had no alternative but to throw

down their arms, or gloriously expire. They bravely preferred death: five hundred took possession of a small island near the bridge, and, after resolutely defending themselves to the last extremity, were cut to pieces. A like number forced their way through the ranks of the enemy, and marched towards Basle; when they were opposed by a large body of horse, posted to prevent the inhabitants of the town from rallying to the relief of their countrymen. Being now surrounded on all sides, they threw themselves into the hospital of St. James; and, lining the walls of the burying-ground, resisted for some time the united assaults of the whole French army. At length the hospital being set on fire, and the cannon having battered down the walls of the burying-ground, they fought no longer in hopes of victory; but still resolving to sell their lives as dear as possible, they continued to defend themselves to the last gasp.

Æneas Sylvius (afterwards pope Pius II.) relates, among other actions of singular valour exerted by this heroic troop, a particular instance which I cannot forbear mentioning. Four French soldiers assaulted a single Swiss, and having killed and stripped him, proceeded to insult the corpse: one of his companions,  
incensed



incensed at this brutal action, seized a battle-axe, rushed upon the four, flew two of them, and drove the others to flight; then flinging the dead body of his friend upon his shoulders, carried it to a place of security; and returning to the attack, fell by the hand of the enemy.

Of the whole number but sixteen escaped from the field of battle; and these, agreeably to the old Spartan discipline, were branded with infamy, for not having sacrificed their lives in defence of their country. Among those who were desperately wounded, and left upon the field, only thirty-two were found alive. The names of many of these glorious combatants were registered, and still remain upon record.

It is not easy to ascertain the number of forces on both sides in this ever-memorable engagement. As far as we can judge, by comparing the several relations of the French and German historians, the army of the dauphin consisted of at least thirty thousand. Charles and his son Louis, in their letters to the German princes on this occasion, assert, that three thousand Swiss fell on the field of battle; and perhaps that account is not much exaggerated. With respect to the slain on the

side of the dauphin, the amount is still more uncertain : his loss, however, must have been very considerable, for he remained three days upon the field of battle ; and, the better to conceal the number of the killed, ordered the dead bodies to be secretly interred in different parts of the neighbourhood. He was effectually prevented from prosecuting his designs upon Switzerland, and compelled to retire with his shattered army into Alsace. Louis himself, indeed, declared, that such another victory would ruin his army ; and generously confessed, that he derived from it no other advantage, than to know and esteem the valour of the Swiss. Accordingly, this combat may be considered as forming a remarkable æra in the history of the Swiss : for it gave rise to their treaty with Charles the Seventh ; the first alliance which they contracted with France.

The war, however, between the House of Austria and Zurich on one side, and the seven cantons on the other, continued until the year 1446, when a peace was concluded by the mediation and decision of certain arbiters : Zurich renounced its connection with the House of Austria ; and the Helvetic Confederacy was again solemnly renewed and confirmed between the eight cantons. Upon this occasion two  
very

very important articles in the public law of Switzerland were finally settled: First, that all disputes between any particular cantons should be decided by the mediation of the neutral cantons; and if either of the two contending parties should decline to acquiesce under their judgment, the neutral cantons are empowered to have recourse to arms, in order to compel the recufant to abide by their determination: Secondly, notwithstanding the right which either of the cantons might have reserved to itself, of contracting alliances with foreign powers, yet the other confederates are to judge whether fuch alliance is contradictory to, or incompatible with, the articles of the general union; and if it should appear to be fo, it is declared null and void.

The Swifs ftill talk of this famous action with the warmeft enthufiafm. Accordingly, the inhabitants of Basle form parties every year, to an inn fituated near the hofpital and burying-ground, in order to commemorate, in a red wine produced from fome vineyards planted on the field of battle, the heroic deeds of their brave countrymen, who fo gloriously facrificed their lives. This wine, which they call the “*Blood of the Swifs*,” is highly prized by the Bafileans, though it has little to recom-



mend it in point of flavour ; nevertheless, I am much mistaken if that line of Horace,

*Non missura cutem nisi plena cruoris,*

was more applicable to the teasing poet he mentions, than it is to those jovial patriotic parties, at the anniversary computations of the “ *Blood of the Swiss.* ”

Near Basle are the ruins of *Augusta Rauricorum*, formerly a large town under the dominion of the Romans, now a small village in the canton of Basle, close to the Rhine. Its ancient remains are very inconsiderable, consisting of a few columns of marble, still standing, and some scattered fragments of pillars, together with a semicircular range of walls upon a rising ground, the greater part of which has fallen, and is almost overgrown with underwood. From the present appearance of the ruins, I should hardly have conjectured, that they once composed part of a theatre, capable of containing above twelve thousand spectators. But the celebrated Schæfflin has given, in his *Alsatia Illustrata*, a particular description of this theatre, and of the temple, to which the marble columns formerly belonged. I noticed also the remains of some small aqueducts, which conveyed water to the town from the distance of above  
twelve

twelve miles ; but none of these antient relics are sufficiently remarkable to merit the trouble of a particular visit.

The peasants, in turning up the ground, frequently find medals of the Roman emperors, from Augustus to Constantine ; and are become, by experience, able to distinguish, with some degree of precision, those that are rare from the more common coins. I purchased of a labourer two medals, which he had just found ; a Trajan and an Albinus ; and though the former was by far the most perfect, yet he exacted three times as much for the latter, because he had never seen it, he said, before.

From Basle I made an excursion to Mulhausen, a town in alliance with the Swiss cantons ; which, though situated at the distance of several miles from the frontiers of Switzerland, and entirely enclosed within the dominions of France, is yet considered and respected as a part of the Helvetic Confederacy ; and entitled to all the privileges enjoyed by that body.

Mulhausen stands in Sundgau, a district of Alsace, about fifteen miles from Basle ; in a fertile plain, at the bottom of a ridge of hills, and at a small distance from the Vosges. The  
walls

walls of the town enclose a circumference of not more than two miles, and its whole territory is comprised within a precinct of eight miles.

This little republic maintained its privileges, which had been granted by the emperors, during the times of feudal tyranny, by contracting an alliance, at different intervals, with Basle, Strasburgh, and the towns of Alsace and Suabia; and afterwards, in the middle of the fifteenth century, with Bern, Friburgh, and Soleure. At length, in 1515, it was received into the Helvetic Confederacy; which league has preserved its liberty and independence from the encroachments of the empire, on one hand, and, on the other, from the attacks of France. The inhabitants are of the Reformed religion. The town contains about eight hundred houses, and six thousand souls, and there are two thousand subjects in the villages within its little territory. Mulhausen owes its present flourishing state to its manufactures, which consist principally of printed linens and cottons.

The government is aristo-democratical. The supreme power resides in the Great and Little Councils, consisting both together of seventy-eight



eight persons, and drawn from the burghers, whose number amounts to seven hundred, distributed into six tribes.

Mr. Koehlin's commercial school deserves to be mentioned. It is a private institution for about thirty scholars, who are instructed in the German, French, and Latin languages; in fencing, dancing, and all polite accomplishments; and more particularly in accounts and book-keeping. The expence, including an uniform, amounts to £. 50 *per annum*. The plan is very judicious, and the whole appeared to be well conducted\*.

\* Mulhausen is no longer an ally of the Helvetic Body. In 1798 it surrendered to the French, after a blockade of two years, and was incorporated with the French republic.

## LETTER 18.

*Bishopric of Basle—Porentru—Abbey of Bellelay  
—Arlesheim—Delmont—Valley of Munster—  
Pierre Pertuis—Valley of St. Imier.*

**A**LTHOUGH great part of the dominions subject to the bishop of Basle, or, as he is called by the Protestants, the Prince of Porentru, is not comprised within the limits of Switzerland; yet as, till lately, he was in alliance with the Catholic cantons, and as many of his subjects, even in those districts which lie within the German empire, are comburghers with Bern, and under the protection of that republic, his territory is usually included in all the topographical accounts of Switzerland. It merits also the notice of the traveller for its romantic scenes, of the mineralogist for the variety of its petrifications and fossils, and of the politician for the peculiarity of its government, and the numerous and complicated immunities of the people.

Having made various excursions into this country, I shall lay before you a general account

of its political state, and a particular description of those parts which I had an opportunity of visiting.

The bishopric of Basle may be classed under two general divisions : the first lies to the south of Pierre Pertuis, and forms a part of Switzerland ; the second, to the north of the same boundary, includes that district situated within the German empire.

The sovereign is chosen by the chapter of eighteen canons, resident at Arlesheim, and confirmed by the pope. He is prince of the German empire, and does homage to the emperor for that part of his territory which lies in the Circle of the Upper Rhine. He was always considered as an ally of the Swiss, by his union with the Catholic cantons, first formed in 1579, and renewed at different intervals, particularly in 1671 and 1697 ; and by being included in the treaty which those cantons contracted with France in 1715. But as he was not comprised among the allies of the Swiss, in the league between the thirteen cantons and Louis the Sixteenth, in 1777, he can at present scarcely be deemed a member of the Helvetic Confederacy.

The first particular alliance with France was concluded in 1739, between the bishop and Louis  
the



the Fifteenth ; and was renewed in 1780. By virtue of this treaty the bishop has troops in the French service ; and his subjects enjoy all the privileges which are granted to the natives of the thirteen cantons.

In case of a rupture between France and the Empire, he is bound to remain neuter. But this neutrality did not, in 1675, prevent the French troops from being quartered in his dominions, as forming part of the empire ; and they were only removed at the intercession of the Catholic cantons. If a misunderstanding should arise between France and the Emperor, the bishop's situation would be extremely embarrassing ; as his doubtful connection with the Swiss would scarcely preserve his territory from being invaded by one of those two powers.

The form of government is limited sovereignty : the bishop being bound, on all important occasions, to consult his chapter ; and his prerogative being confined by the great immunities enjoyed by his subjects in general, and particularly by those of the Reformed communion. He nominates to all employments, both civil and military, and appoints the bailifs or governors ; criminal justice is administered in his name , and he has the power of pardoning. In civil proceedings, he receives an appeal from the  
inferior

inferior courts; but in his German dominions, when the cause exceeds the value of a stipulated sum, it may be carried to the chambers of Wetzlar or Vienna.

The subjects of the bishop are partly Protestants and partly Catholics. The Protestants, of whom a more particular account will be given, inhabit the greater part of the valley of Munster, and the whole district to the south of Pierre Pertuis, and are about 15,000; the Catholics amount to 35,000.

The French and German languages being both spoken in the bishop's dominions, several places have two names, that scarcely resemble each other; namely, *Munster* and *Moi-tier*, *Dachfeld* and *Tavannes*, *Delmont* and *Delfberg*, *Corrandelin* and *Rennendorf*, *Elay* and *Seehof*.

Porentru, capital of the bishop's dominions, and his principal residence, is situated in the bailliage of Elsgau, about three miles from the frontiers of France. It is a small but neat town; and its position, in an oval plain, surrounded by well-wooded hills, and watered by a serpentine rivulet, is exceedingly pleasant. The episcopal palace, which has been lately repaired and augmented, stands on an eminence overlooking the town, and the environs fertile in corn and pasture.



ture. One of the towers, built of stone, and said to be of Roman workmanship, still remains a monument of its antiquity.

The high ways, which lead from all quarters to Porentru, and have been formed at a considerable expence, do honour to the sovereigns of this country. The road to Bellelay and Bienne is a magnificent causeway; is carried upon hanging terraces; through "twilight groves," and along continued ascents and declivities. I passed it by moonlight; and the reflection of the rays quivering through the thick foliage was inconceivably beautiful.

Bellelay, which I visited in my journey from Bienne to Porentru, is a rich abbey of Benedictines, about twenty miles from the capital, in a solitary but not unpleasant situation, surrounded by mountains, and sheltered by forests. This abbey is not merely confined to religious purposes; the late abbot, Nicholas de Luce, having instituted a military academy for the young nobility and gentry. For this purpose he erected a large building near the abbey, and provided suitable masters and professors. When I was there, the number of scholars amounted to forty. They are instructed in various branches of polite literature; they wear uniforms; and are trained to military manœuvres and exercises. The cheap-  
ness



ness of this school, and its distance from the dissipation of large towns, render it of great public utility. The whole expence of each scholar, for his board, lodging, instruction, and various lessons, scarcely exceeds £. 20 *per annum*. It is curious to find a military academy established in the midst of rocks and forests, and within the walls of a convent; and to observe Benedictine friars, instead of wasting their time in monkish ignorance, rendering themselves beneficial to society.

The chapter, composed of eighteen canons, who, upon a vacancy in the see, possess the right of electing the bishop, was fixed at Friburgh in Brisgau from the period of the reformation, which drove them from Basle, to 1677, when Friburgh was occupied by the French troops. In the following year the chapter was transferred to Arlesheim, where it now resides. The vacant canonries are filled alternately by the pope and chapter.

On the 14th of August 1786, I made, in company with several friends, an excursion to Arlesheim, which is a small but pleasant place, almost four miles from Basle. We had the honour of dining with the Baron de Ligertz, one of the canons. After a repast,

no less elegant than agreeable, our host politely accompanied us to a garden styled The Hermitage, about a quarter of a mile from Arlesheim; which was laid out at the joint expence of the baron and of Madame d'Andlau, the bailif's lady, with a view to employ the poor in a time of great scarcity, and to provide walks for the inhabitants of the town; the grounds are very extensive and pleasant. The walks are carried along the sides of the rocks, which are richly wooded, and through a delightful semicircular plain, bounded by fertile hills, and watered by a small lake, the borders of which are peculiarly wild and picturesque. Several caverns, hollowed and arched by the hand of nature, add to the romantic singularity of the scenery; while many transparent streams, conveyed from a considerable distance, fall in small cascades, or bubble from the ground like real springs. A fastidious observer might perhaps remark of this enchanting spot, that in a few circumstances nature has been too much sacrificed to art; and that there are some buildings less calculated to please than to surprise.

An elegant inscription for this charming hermitage was extemporarily composed by professor Oberlin of Strasburgh, one of our party.

HOSPES

HOSPES·AMICE·  
HASCE·DELICIAS·  
NATURÆ·DEBES·  
DEBES·INDUSTRIÆ·  
BALBINÆ·AB·ANDLAV·  
HENRICI·A·LIGERTZ.

I shall close this letter with an account of my journey from Basle to Bienne, through the vallies of Lauffen, Delmont, Munster, and St. Imier, a tract of country in the bishopric of Basle, which is not inferior in beauty to the most delightful parts of Switzerland.

We quitted Basle early in the morning, and passed through a fertile plain watered by the Birs, and bounded by two chains of the Jura; one whereof terminates abruptly, supporting on its summit the castle of Wertenburgh. As we continued our route, the plain gradually narrowed, the mountains approached each other, and we entered the rich valley of Lauffen, enclosed between the rocks, sprinkled with groves of oak and beech, and exhibiting many romantic points of view. Lauffen, which gives name to the valley, has its own magistrates, and inferior courts of justice. The natives are industrious: those who are not employed in agriculture gain a comfortable livelihood from making



cloth, spinning yarn, and knitting worsted stockings. The inhabitants of the valley talk German, and those of Sautier, a small neighbouring village, French ; which language is spoken through the vallies of Delmont, Munster, and St. Imier.

About three leagues from Lauffen we came to a narrow pass, entered the valley of Delmont, near Sautier ; quitted the high road, and gently ascended to Delmont, which stands pleasantly on an acclivity, backed by a ridge of rocks embrowned with firs.

In this small town reside the provost and canons, who compose the chapter formerly established at Munster ; which was removed here, in 1630, on the introduction of the Reformed religion into the valley of Munster. At the extremity of the town is the episcopal palace, built, in 1718, by Conrad baron of Reinach, and bishop of Basle : it commands a fine view of the adjacent country. The bailif, who holds his court in this town, has jurisdiction over the vallies of Delmont and Munster. In criminal proceedings he arrests and examines, and can inflict small penalties for trifling misdemeanors ; but in all cases of notoriety, the delinquent is either tried at Porentru, or the bailif's sentence must be confirmed or amended in that supreme tribunal.

tribunal. Civil causes are first adjudged in the provincial courts ; from whose decision an appeal lies to the episcopal tribunal at Porentru, and from thence to the imperial chambers of Wetzlar or Vienna. Delmont contains eight hundred inhabitants, who are all Catholics : they have their own magistrates and inferior tribunals.

About a mile from Delmont I stopped at Corrandelin, a small village in the Catholic district of the valley of Munster, in order to examine an iron foundery belonging to the bishop. The ore is drawn from the valley of Delmont, near the villages of Corou, Wick, Recolens, and Sepres ; it is taken from the ground in small pieces, seldom larger than a pea. The director informed me, that it is usually found in that state, and very rarely in masses. The largest mass he ever remembered to have seen was ten feet long, two thick, and two broad. He added, that the mountains in the neighbourhood abound with ore, which would yield considerable quantities of iron, if sufficient charcoal could be procured for the furnaces. As he was but lately appointed director, he could not give any accurate intelligence concerning the annual quantity of iron smelted in this foundery ; but informed me, in general, that the different



ores yielded altogether two thirds of pure mineral, the quality whereof was extremely fine, and scarcely inferior to the best sort exported from Sweden.

Corrandelin, together with the villages of Chatillon, Rossémaison, Vellerat, Courchappois, Corbaon, Mervellier, and Elay, though connected, in regard to ecclesiastical affairs, with the valley of Delmont, form that part of the valley of Munster, which is called the *Catholic*, or *Lower* District. It is denominated the *Catholic* District, because the inhabitants are exclusively of the Romish church; and *Lower* District, because it is situated *unter den felsen*, or *below* the ridge of rocks which separate it from the *Upper*, or *Protestant* District. Before I proceed further, it will be necessary to describe the general divisions of this valley, and the civil and religious immunities of the natives, that you may be enabled to comprehend its complicated topography and curious political state, by which, though subject to the bishop of Basle, it is under the protection of the canton of Bern.

The valley of Munster, or Moitier, extends from the valley of Delmont to Pierre Pertuis; and is included in that part of the bishop's dominions which lie within the German empire.

But,



But, as the inhabitants have, for above three hundred years, been under the protection of Bern, the valley is considered by many authors as forming part of Switzerland. It is divided into two principal districts; the *Catholic* or *Lower* District, which lies at the extremity of the valley of Delmont, and comprises the eight villages above mentioned; the *Protestant* or *Upper* District, which stretches from the chain of rocks near Corrandelin, to Pierre Pertuis, its southern boundary; and containing, 1. The Greater Valley, or Valley of Tavannes; and 2. The Lesser Valley, which is subdivided into Grand-Val, or the Great Valley, and the Little Valley, or the Valley of Sornetan.

The inhabitants of both districts are comburghers with the canton of Bern. The first treaty of comburghership was contracted in 1484. In that year, Bern and the bishop of Basle respectively supporting two candidates for the provostship of Munster; the former took possession of the whole valley, and exacted homage from the inhabitants. These disputes being compromised at the treaty of Corrandelin, Bern restored the valley to the bishop on the following conditions: that the inhabitants should be maintained in all their privileges;

continue as comburghers with Bern, under the protection of that republic; remain neuter in case of a war between Bern and the bishop; and follow the standard of Bern, when engaged in hostilities against any other power. This treaty of comburghership, renewed at different intervals, has excited frequent disputes between Bern and the bishop, and particularly in 1705 and 1711 occasioned an open rupture. These disputes were finally adjusted at the pacification of Arau; when the bishop ratified the treaty of comburghership, confirmed all the rights and immunities of the inhabitants, and consented to the mediation and interference of Bern.

The affairs of religion excited for some time no less contest between the bishop and Bern, than the treaty of comburghership. The reformation being adopted, in 1531, by a considerable number of the inhabitants in the valley of Munster, civil commotions ensued; Bern interfered in behalf of the Protestants, and the bishop protected the ancient church establishment. It was at length amicably settled between both parties; that the majority of each parish should freely decide, whether the inhabitants should profess the Roman catholic or the Reformed religion; and that the chapter of Munster should continue  
to



to receive the tythes, on condition of discharging the salaries of the Protestant ministers. In consequence of this rational compromise, the eight villages, which now form the *Lower* District, voted for the maintenance of the Catholic religion; and the parishes of the upper district for the Reformed church. Accordingly the two persuasions were respectively established in these two districts; the chapter retained its estates and tythes, and quitting Munster, where the new doctrines were admitted, retired first to Soleure, and afterwards settled at Delmont: but, as several Protestants and Catholics continued promiscuously to inhabit the two districts, disturbances were occasionally renewed. Nor were the religious differences entirely composed till the peace of Arau; which enjoined, that all the members of the two persuasions should be finally separated; that all the inhabitants of the *Upper* district, who then professed or should hereafter profess the Catholic religion, should retire to Elay; and that, in the same manner, the Protestants in the *Lower* district should remove to the *Upper* district. Since this period, the most perfect harmony has subsisted between them.

By virtue of the alliance with Bern, that republic annually deposes one of its magistrates  
and



and an ecclesiastic to this valley. The magistrate inquires if the civil and religious immunities have been preserved inviolate; the ecclesiastic, who is called inspector of the churches in the valley of Munster, examines into the state of church discipline, and distributes among the inhabitants of the *Upper* district catechisms and psalters. Bern also approves the nomination of the ministers to the vacant benefices, some of whom are appointed and paid by the bishop, others by the chapters of Delmont and Bellelay; as the bishop or chapters possess the tythes in the respective parishes.

Soon after quitting Corrandelin, I entered the *Protestant* district, through a pass between two rocks, which nearly approach each other, and just leave an opening sufficient for the river Birs and the road, and continued along a narrow glen, about four miles in length. The road winds above the impetuous Birs, and at the bottom of rocks of white limestone, of inaccessible height, and though in most places absolutely perpendicular, yet agreeably feathered with trees, particularly towards their summits, which over-hang, and scarcely admit the light of the sun. In the midst of this glen is La Roche, the first Protestant village in the valley of Munster; the houses stand on both sides  
of



W. Smith del.



W. Smith del.







of the Birs, where the rocks recede a little, and present a gentle slope.

On issuing from this glen, we entered a fertile plain encircled by hills, in the midst of which is situated the village of Munster or Moitier: it takes that appellation from the chapter of canons, who, upon the reformation, quitted this place of their residence, and settled at Delmont.

About half a mile from Munster we came into another glen, near three miles in length: it is called *Chaluet*, of a similar nature with that which we traversed between Corrandelin and the plain of Munster, but still wilder and more craggy, deeper and more obscure. It is also divided by the Birs, which rushes through it with great impetuosity; and is so narrow, that the road occupies the whole space between the torrent and the mountain, and the wheels of our carriage frequently on one side brushed the rock, and on the other ran close to the precipice which overhangs the river. This causeway, over broken crags and steep precipices, does honour to the prince who carried it into execution. An inscription, which I observed near a bridge in the midst of this obscure glen, may perhaps seem exaggerated to a person unacquainted with the natural impediments  
of

of the country ; but to me on the spot appeared  
strictly consonant to truth :

*Josephus Gulielmus*  
*Ex Rinchnis de Baldenstein*  
*Basiliensium Episcopus Princeps*  
*Viam Veteribus Inclusam*  
*Rupibus et Claustris Montium Ruptis*  
*Birsâ Pontibus Stratâ*  
*Opere Romanis Digno*  
*Aperuit.*  
*Anno. D. M.DCC.LII.*

Although in various parts of Switzerland I had frequently observed the justness of the remark, that in all deep vallies which intersect the mountains, the salient angles on one side alternately correspond with the cavities on the other ; and that parallel strata of rock answer to each other, in all directions and at all heights ; yet I never saw this fact more strongly exemplified than in the two ridges of lime-stone bordering this glen. They are of a stupendous height ; and the strata horizontal, inclined, or almost perpendicular on one side, are exactly similar and of the same thickness on the other : a circumstance which, joined to the corresponding situation of the angles, seems to









prove, that they were formerly united, and either rent asunder by a sudden convulsion, or separated by the gradual attrition of the waters.

At the extremity of the Chaluet we entered another plain, well cultivated, and agreeably spotted with villages; and arrived towards the close of the evening at Molleray, where we passed the night. The people appear happy and contented, and are extremely industrious. The greater part are employed in agriculture; a few, encouraged by their neighbours of Locle and Chaux de Fond, have lately introduced several trades into these mountains; and Belleval, a small neighbouring village, already contains five watchmakers.

From Molleray we continued along a fertile plain by the side of the Birs; through several pleasant and well looking villages, of which Tavannes, in German *Dachfeld*, is the largest. In about two miles we arrived at the extremity of the plain, which is closed by a rock, through which opens the celebrated pass called *Pierre Pertuis*. At the bottom of this rock, the Birs bursts from the ground in several copious springs, and turns two mills within a few paces of its principal source.

*Pierre*

*Pierre Pertuis* is a large arched aperture through a solid rock, about thirty feet long, forty-five broad, and thirty high in the lowest part, which some aver to have been formed by nature, others by art. A Roman inscription over the arch, extremely defaced, has given sufficient employment to the ingenuity of antiquaries. Having seen several fac-similes, greatly differing from each other, I copied it as exactly as the height would permit.

AVMINI AVGS.  
 'M  
 CTA PER  
 O I VM PATER.  
 IVI COL. HELV.

Of this inscription many solutions have been attempted; but the most probable are the two following:

*Numini Augustorum via facta per Titum dum-  
 nium Paternum* Π *virum Colon Helvet.*—Others  
 read, *per montem durum Paternus.*

Both these solutions imply, that a road was formed through the mountains by Paternus, a duumvir, during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius  
 and



and Verus. From the latter explanation, *per montem durvum*, some antiquarians have endeavoured to prove, that he cut through the rock; and consequently, that the arch is the work of art, not of nature: while others maintain, that it by no means follows, even from this reading, that the rock was pierced by order of Paternus: but merely that the road was carried through the rock\*. On examining the inscription with attention, the words which antiquarians have supplied, to support their particular systems, are extremely doubtful; and to me, who observed the arch without partiality to any hypothesis, it appeared to have been originally a great cavern, either totally formed by nature, or, if assisted by art, that only a small part of its southern extremity was opened by the labour of man.

The southern extremity of *Pierre Pertuis* leads into the valley of St. Imier, sometimes called Enguel, which comprises the bishop's dominions lying in Switzerland. The inhabitants are Protestants, and governed by a bailif appointed by the bishop. He resides at Courtelari; but his authority is exceedingly limited by the various

\* The reader, who wishes to examine this subject with attention, is referred to Schæfflin's *Alsatia Illustrata*, and to a dissertation on the subject published by Buxtorf.

privileges, both civil and religious, possessed by the natives. Their religious immunities, confirmed by the bishop, are guaranteed by the four Reformed cantons. The whole district lies within the Jura mountains; and is fertile in pasture; the inhabitants are industrious.

On arriving at the extremity of mount Jura, a sudden prospect burst upon our view, commanding the undulating country fertilized by the Aar, backed by that majestic chain of Alps which extends beyond the frontiers of Savoy. Descending gently into the plain with this glorious prospect before us, and which was heightened by the luminous splendour of the mid-day sun, we crossed the Sure, and finished our delightful expedition at Bienne.

From Pierre Pertuis to Bienne, a superb causeway is carried along a continual descent for six miles; it winds through thick forests, and overhangs the deep abyss, in which the Sure, a turbid and impetuous torrent, precipitates its course, always roaring, and frequently unseen, in its rocky channel\*.

\* The whole bishopric of Basle is now annexed to France. In 1792 their troops overran the country of Porentru, or the German part, under the pretence of delivering the natives from slavery, and took possession of the famous pass of Pierre Pertuis. This district was  
ceded

## LETTER 19.

*The Town of Bienne.*

THE small territory of Bienne, containing scarcely six thousand inhabitants, lies between the lake and a chain of the Jura mountains; it is surrounded by the cantons of Bern and Soleure,

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ceded to France by the treaty of Campo Formio, and is formed into the department of Mont Terrible.

In December 1798 the Helvetic part of the territory was entered by the French general St. Cyr; he took possession of it in the name of the republic, declaring that France succeeded to the property, dominions, rights, and prerogatives of the bishop.

This district was also annexed to the department of Mont Terrible; and the proclamation of Mengaud to the unoffending natives, which subjected their country to the dominion of France, is a combination of arrogance, insult, and mockery.

“ Peace and safety to all his friends! Mengaud, Commissary of the Executive Directory, to the inhabitants of all the countries not yet occupied by the French republic, dependencies upon the old bishopric of Basle, on the left bank of the Rhine.



Soleure, the bishopric of Basle, and the principality of Neuchatel. The town is situated at the

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“ Citizens !

“ The re-union of a part of the old principality of Porrentruy, equally decided the incorporation of your country with the French republic.

“ This proceeding of France is that of a free people, substituted to the rights of a government against Nature, which overwhelms you. And because the exercise of those rights, become ours, did not sooner take place, by purging them of all that is incompatible with the dignity of man, it does not follow, that we have forgotten that you are still in chains. We come to break them.

“ Happier than your fathers, whose blood flowed in the wars which founded the different species of government in Switzerland, and which have only bequeathed you a burthenfome and degrading existence, you are at length going to enjoy the blessings of Providence, who only created men to make them members of one and the same family.

“ You knew nothing but tithes, *corvées*, &c. ; you had only priests, nobles, and privileged persons : your commerce, your industry, your arts, in short your very subsistence, all bore the stamp of the sacerdotal despotism so dexterously combined with a no less odious tyranny. Now you are men : liberty and equality will no longer permit among you any other distinction than that of merit, talents, and virtue. Called all indiscriminately to the helm of the society, in the support and safety of which

the foot of the Jura, and at a little distance from the lake ; which is here about nine miles in length, and four in breadth : the borders are pleasing and picturesque ; and the town of Nidau forms a very beautiful object upon its eastern side.

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which you are all equally interested, your subsistence will in future be secure, the granaries of the French republic being the property of all its children. Your trade, encouraged within, protected without, will no longer be shackled. Industry, the arts, agriculture, will receive encouragements to be expected only from a nation victorious, free, powerful, and generous, enlightened on the nature of rights, and on the manner of exercising them.

“ Learn to appreciate these advantages, and merit them by turning a deaf ear to the interested and treacherous insinuations of the evil-minded and fools, who endeavour to depreciate them, and to mislead you.

“ We come among you as friends. We are your brothers. Do not be afraid of any ill treatment. Persons and property shall be protected, as much as the enemies of liberty shall be oppressed. The most exact and strict discipline shall be observed by the warriors, who never had, nor ever will have, any other enemies than those of liberty. Such are the orders of the Executive Directory.

“ MENGAUD,

“ Commissioner of the Executive Directory.”

P 2

The

The bishop of Basle is the sovereign of this little state: his power, formerly considerable, is at present exceedingly limited. Indeed the constitution of Bienne is of so very peculiar a nature, that I know not well by what name it can be distinguished: it cannot properly be called either a limited monarchy, or an independent republic; but seems rather to be a mixed government, partaking somewhat of both.

The bishop of Basle receives, upon his promotion to the see, the homage of the citizens and militia of this town, with all the apparent ceremonials of the most absolute submission; but at the same time he confirms, in the strongest manner, all their privileges and franchises. He is represented by a mayor of his own appointing, whose power and office consist in convoking, and presiding in, the Little Council, as the chief court of justice; in collecting the suffrages, and declaring the sentence; but without giving any vote himself. And, although justice is carried on, and executed, in the name of the bishop, yet neither that prince nor the mayor has the prerogative of pardoning criminals, or of mitigating the sentence. All causes, civil as well as criminal, are brought before this council in the first instance; and, in more important proceedings,



ceedings, an appeal lies to the Sovereign Council: in both cases, each party chooses a member of the council to act as his advocate; which office he is obliged to discharge without fee or recompence.

The sovereign's revenue amounts only to about £. 300 a-year; but, mean as his civil list is, it is still more considerable than his power; for he does not possess the least share of the administration. The legislative authority resides in the Great and Little Councils combined: the former consists of forty members, and the latter, in which the executive power is vested, is composed of twenty-four; the members of each must be married men. Both these councils elect their respective members; and so far the constitution is entirely aristocratical. The burgo-master, or chief of the regency, is chosen by the two councils, and presides at their meetings; he continues in office during life; but he, as well as the several magistrates, must be confirmed annually by the two councils. The salaries annexed to these posts are exceedingly moderate, and indeed the general expences of government are so very small, that, in proportion to them, its revenues may well be considered as abundantly ample.

It appears, therefore, that this Protestant republic, notwithstanding the sovereignty of its Catholic bishop, enjoys in the fullest extent the power of imposing taxes, contracting alliances, declaring war and peace ; and, in short, of exercising every other act of absolute and independent legislation. This singular constitution is guaranteed by Bern, Friburgh, and Soleure, with whom the town is closely allied ; in consequence of which, it becomes a member of the Helvetic Confederacy. This alliance between those cantons and the town of Bienne, is of a superior nature to that of the same cantons with the bishop of Basle : for the town enjoys the right of sending deputies to every general diet, ordinary and extraordinary ; whereas the bishop does not possess the same privilege.

The language of the country is a provincial German ; but, as the territory borders upon the principality of Neuchatel, the inhabitants speak also a corrupted French. They are a very active and industrious people ; several manufactures are established in the town, which, considering its size, carries on a tolerable trade.

I have often had occasion to observe, that the middling class of people in Switzerland are far more intelligent than those of the same rank in any other

other country. Accordingly, I invited last night my landlord of the Crown inn to sup with me; and found him by no means disposed to be a silent guest. He gave me a long account of the late ceremony, when the citizens did homage to their new bishop. I was pleased to hear him expatiate, with all the enthusiasm of national pride, upon the beauty and grandeur of the scene; the magnificence of the procession; the number of spectators, as well strangers as natives, who were assembled; together with the entertainments and balls that were given upon that occasion. By the lofty terms in which he spoke of this procession, you would have imagined, at least, that he had been describing the coronation of the emperor of Germany, or the king of France; and, in truth, to an inhabitant of Bienne, whose government is administered without the least degree of external pomp, and where luxury has as yet made but little progress, the ceremony must have appeared a very striking spectacle. My host's narrative recalled to my remembrance the accounts of those ancient feudal sovereignties; when the great vassals of the crown did homage to their liege lord; and, while in *terms* they promised him unlimited obedience,



maintained, in *fact*, every essential of independence.

I have just been amusing myself in some pleasant walks, that lie by the side of the lake, which is here prettily skirted with country houses. In my way I passed over a plain between the town and the lake, which the Sovereign Council, by a kind of agrarian law that does honour to the legislature, lately allotted, in distinct portions, to each burgher, for his own particular use ; and it is entirely laid out in little kitchen-gardens. The general government, indeed, of this miniature state, is well administered. It has lately adopted the liberal policy of conferring the burghership at an easy rate : a wise regulation, which cannot fail of increasing the population of the town, and extending its commerce.

I know your sentiments much too well, my dear sir, to apologize for calling your attention in the present instance, as in some others, to these diminutive commonwealths. The various modifications of government, into which civil society is divided, is a speculation that will always afford matter both of entertainment and reflection, to a philosophic mind ; and I am persuaded, that you consider the meanest spot  
of

of this globe consecrated by liberty, to be an object worthy, not only of your curiosity, but your veneration \*.

I am, &c.

\* Bienne, which forms an important pass into the Swiss territories, was occupied by the French on the 8th of February 1798, and annexed to France as subject to the bishop of Basle, whose rights they assumed in consequence of having seized his territories. It is difficult to decide whether the French accounts of the seizure of this little republic are more burlesque or insulting :

“ 20 *Pluviose*.—The day before yesterday, at half past four in the afternoon, the French republicans under the command of General Novion arrived at the gates of Bienne, and were met by the two councils, who poured forth their vows for the re-union to the great nation. After a short interview, the Republicans entered the town, drums beating and colours flying ; and on their arrival at the town-house, the general read the proclamation, in the name of the French republic, which produced a surprising effect. Those who were seduced by the oligarchy of Bern were struck motionless with astonishment ; but, on recovering their senses, they could not help declaring that Wisdom herself had dictated the proclamation. During a space of four hundred years no troops had been seen in the town of Bienne ; the impression, therefore, was deeply felt. How glorious is the triumph of virtue and friendship !

“ The brave General Novion has already gained all hearts. His mildness, wisdom, and republican virtue, will

## LETTER 20.

*The Town and Canton of Soleure—Detail of the Government—Antient and New Burghers—Assembly of the Rosengarten.*

THE direct road from Basle to Soleure lies through the midst of the Jura mountains, along the romantic vale of Balstal, which is remarkable for its fertility. The road from Bienne to Soleure traverses a well-cultivated valley,

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will make a deeper impression on the Helvetic people than the terrible and always victorious bayonet. I rejoice to hear him exclaim, “ Without morals, without “ virtue, there is no true happiness !” for, as Racine observes,

“ *La gloire des méchants en un moment s’éteint.*”

“ Citizen Bresson, constituted mayor of Bienne by the French government, has acquired by his mildness and civism the general confidence and love of the inhabitants. He has several times appeared in the council, decorated with the national scarf. To him we owe the happy disposition of the people. To-morrow we shall solemnly plant the tree of liberty. Long live the Republic !”

The



valley, watered by the Aar, at the foot of a piked ridge, which forms a branch of mount Jura ; its fides,

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The account of this ceremony is thus detailed in another letter :

“ Announce to the French republic the solemn ceremony of planting the tree of liberty, which took place at eleven in the morning.

“ The republican phalanxes, led by General Nouvion, assembled in the square before the town-house, and were met by the French mayor and the magistracy. Instantly the tri-colour flag waved on the town-house, and warlike music struck up. Several energetic harangues, by the general, the mayor, and many citizens both of Bienne and France, made the deepest impression. Every sentence breathed the purest civism and the mildest philanthropy. Patriotic songs were then sung, a grand dinner was given by the general, and toasts drank to the immortality of the great nation, and to the wished-for union of the republic of Bienne to the first republic of the world. The festival was terminated by a ball, which continued the whole night, and every thing was conducted with the greatest decorum, and the most pleasing fraternity prevailed. The general was present for a short time, and his heart was penetrated with the view of this delightful picture ; all feeling souls experienced the most exquisite sensations. The joy of the people was announced by a brilliant illumination, allegorical devices, and patriotic songs. Beautiful young women appeared at the ball decorated with tri-colour ribbands and sashes. What a noble triumph for the French republic is that made by friendship and sweet fraternity !”

*Moniteur, 13th Ventiose (8th March).*

sides, from the bottom to the summit, are so embrowned with overhanging forests of pine and fir, as to exhibit only occasional intervals of naked rock, beds of torrents, and a few solitary specks of pasture, and are so wild and steep as, within the extent of five leagues, scarcely to display the appearance of a single house, or a trace of the slightest foot-way. Near Soleure this chain of the Jura, called *Weissenstein*, abruptly diminishes in height, becomes gradually sloping, and is chequered to the summit with fields of corn and pasture.

Soleure is pleasantly situated upon the Aar, which here expands its banks and opens into a fine and broad river. I will not exert the privilege of a traveller, and tell you, what some extravagant antiquaries do not scruple to assert, that it was built by the patriarch Abraham; but you will have no difficulty, perhaps, in believing what others maintain, that it was one of the twelve towns which were destroyed upon the emigration of the original inhabitants into Gaul. It appears probable, from a great number of inscriptions, medals, and other antiquities, which have been found in the neighbourhood, that it was re-peopled by a Roman colony; and it certainly was a Roman station, as its antient appellation, *Castrum Salodurense*, implies.

implies. During that period of barbarism which succeeded the downfall of the Roman empire, it was sacked and destroyed by those northern nations who over-ran the greatest part of Europe. From the time of its re-establishment, until its admission into the Helvetic Confederacy in 1481, its state was similar to that of many other imperial towns, which acquired a gradual accession of territory, and, after various struggles, finally secured independence.

Soleure is a small but extremely neat town, surrounded by regular stone fortifications, erected in the beginning of the present century; the walls enclose scarcely more than fifty square acres, and, including the suburbs, contain about four thousand souls. Among the most remarkable objects of curiosity in the town is the new church, which was begun in 1762, and finished in 1772; it is a noble edifice, of whitish-grey stone, drawn from the neighbouring quarries, which is a species of rude marble, and receives a good polish. The lower part of the building is of the Corinthian, the upper of the Composite order: the façade, which consists of a portico, surmounted by an elegant tower, presents itself finely at the extremity of the principal street. Pizoni was the architect, and the  
expence



expence amounted to at least £. 80,000; a considerable sum for so small a republic, whose revenues scarcely surpass £. 12,000 *per annum*. The interior is simple yet elegant, and decorated with a few modern paintings of inconsiderable merit; of which the most esteemed is the Last Supper, by Corvi, a Roman artist. A picture by Rubens and his scholars, in the church of the Cordeliers, and one by Le Sueur, in that of the Capuchins, deserve perhaps to be noticed by the traveller, who is fond of the fine arts. The town-house is not in itself worthy of observation, but is mentioned only as being the place of meeting for the Great Council and Senate.

The public prison, newly constructed, is a solid edifice of stone, and well adapted to the purpose of the building; the prisoners being confined in separate cells. Although the penal laws are severe in theory, yet the judicial sentences, in criminal affairs, are so remarkably mild, that a prisoner, on his acquittal, wrote the following inscription on the wall of his cell: “ He who is inclined to rob, and escape hanging, let him rob in the canton of Soleure.”

The public library deserves to be mentioned, not for the number or rarity of the volumes, but for the literary zeal of the Abbé Herman,  
canon

canon of the cathedral, to whom it owes its origin. On my first visit to this town, in 1776, there was no public collection of books; but a few years ago, that ingenious ecclesiastic amassed about four hundred volumes, obtained from government an apartment in the town-house, where he deposited them, and requested to be appointed librarian without a salary. His petition being granted, he continued to augment his little collection; and from this small beginning has increased it already to eleven thousand books, among which are above a hundred and fifty printed in the fifteenth century. At the two extremities of the room are inscribed the names of the benefactors to this library; but there is no fund yet established for its support or augmentation.

The Abbé has also begun to form a cabinet of medals; which, though at present extremely small, will increase like the library. He pointed out to me a very rare medal, discovered in digging the foundation for the new cathedral; it is in bronze, of the middle size; on one side is the head of Septimius Severus, with the inscription, *L. Septimius Severus Pius Aug. P. M. Tr. P. xviii. Cos. iii. P. P.* On the reverse, a figure sitting, before it a prow of a ship, and a genius or little boy. Great merit is due

to

to the Abbé for laying the foundation of this library, in a town where literature is not much encouraged; and his disinterestedness is worthy of notice, as his income does not exceed £. 160 *per annum*. This learned ecclesiastic is now employed in writing an account of Soleure at the period of the Reformation, and is collecting ample materials for a complete history of the canton.

With respect to natural history, the only cabinet in the town is that formed by Senator Wallier: it is a small collection, but well chosen, and particularly interesting to the naturalist who travels into these parts, because the ingenious collector has chiefly confined himself to the minerals and petrifications of the canton.

The circumjacent country is exceedingly pleasing and diversified, and exhibits several points of view which are as agreeable as wild, and as beautiful as romantic. Among these we were particularly struck with the situation of the hermitage called des Croix, about half a mile from the town, near the stone quarry: it stands in a recess between two ridges of perpendicular rocks, watered by a lively stream; one extremity is closed by a small wood, and the other opens into fertile grounds backed by the dark Jura. Among the villas, in the environs, remarkable









remarkable for their position, may be mentioned Ricaberg, built by M. de Vigur; it stands at the bottom of a gentle hill, declining towards the winding Aar, and commands a view of Soleure, half hid by the intervening trees, and Bleikenberg, belonging to Major de Roll, situated amid waving grounds divided into inclosures, similar to the fertile counties of England, the Jura rising like the highlands of Scotland, and at a distance the sublime alps, which characterise this romantic country.

The canton of Soleure, which holds the eleventh rank in the Helvetic Confederacy, stretches partly through the plain, and partly along the chains of the Jura, and contains about fifty thousand souls, including the inhabitants of the capital. The soil, for the most part, is fertile in corn, and those districts which lie within the Jura, abound in excellent pastures. The trade, both of the town and canton, is of little value, although the situation is commodious for an extensive commerce. It is divided into eleven districts or bailliages, called Interior and Exterior; the former are governed by bailifs, who are senators, and remain in the towns; the latter, by bailifs drawn from the members of the Great Council, who reside in their bailliages.



The following is a list of the bailliages, with their average annual value; the four first are interior, the remainder exterior.

Buckegberg	£. 166	Beckburgh	£. 750
Kriegstetten	- 146	Goefgen	- 500
Laeberen, or		Olten	- - 333
Grenche	- 83	Dorneck	- 834
Flamenthal	- 62	Tierstein	- 417
Falkenstein	- 546	Gilgenberg	- 375

The inhabitants of the canton are Catholics, excepting those in the bailliage of Buckegberg, who profess the Reformed religion. In spiritual affairs, the Catholics depend on three bishops: the greater part of the capital, the bailliages of Laeberen and Flamenthal, are in the diocese of the bishop of Lausanne, resident at Friburgh; the remainder of the capital, the bailliage of Kriegstetten, and the villages in the bailliage of Olten, in that of the bishop of Constance; while the other bailliages, and the town of Olten, depend on the bishop of Basle. But neither of these bishops can issue any ordinance, or even visit their dioceses, without the approbation of the Senate. There are two chapters in this canton; one at Soleure, founded in 930 by Queen Bertha, widow of Rhodolph II. King of Burgundy,

composed

composed of a provost, whose salary amounts to £. 360 *per annum*, and of eleven canons, each of whom enjoys a revenue of £. 160. The provost is chosen by the Senate, and the canons are appointed alternately by the Pope and Senate. The other chapter, of Schoenenwerth, founded by the antient counts of Falkenstein, consists of a provost and five canons, nominated by the Senate; the annual salary of the provost is £. 125, and of each canon £. 100. There are also an abbey of Benedictines, four convents, and three nunneries; the revenues of which amount to £. 2,250.

The principal charitable institutions are, an hospital at Soleure, and another at Olten, for the reception of burghers, subjects, and foreigners; the foundation of Thurigan, for old persons of both sexes, belonging to the burghership; a foundling hospital for orphans, and for children of poor burghers; and the hospital of St. Catharine, for the insane and incurables.

The only persons in the canton of Soleure, who profess the Reformed religion, are those who inhabit the bailliage of Buckegberg. In ecclesiastical affairs, the inhabitants, though subject to Soleure, are under the protection of Bern. Formerly this complication of political and religious interests created frequent misunderstandings

between the two cantons, but matters were amicably and finally adjusted, on the 18th of November 1681, at the treaty of Winingen. The inhabitants take the oath of fidelity, every third year, to the government of Soleure; but if aggrieved in their religious establishment, can have recourse to Bern. The senate of Bern nominates to the vacant benefices, but the priests are under the necessity of obtaining the confirmation of the chapter of Soleure. A deputy from Bern presents the new minister to his parishioners; but the bailif is obliged to be present at this ceremony, as deputy from the republic of Soleure. Bern enjoys also supreme jurisdiction in criminal affairs. If a criminal is arrested for any capital offence, he is tried by the bailif of Buckegberg, and the jury of the bailliage; and, if condemned to death, he is delivered for execution to Bern, provided that republic defrays the expence of the trial. Soleure enjoys all the other rights of sovereignty; such as the power of levying taxes, appeals in the last resort; and even decides all matrimonial and ecclesiastical concerns, with this proviso, that the decision shall be regulated according to the articles of the treaty of Winingen. Among the natives in the canton, several inhabiting the bailliages of Thierstein and  
Gildenberg



Gildenberg were serfs ; but, in 1785, their servitude, so contrary to the principles of that equal liberty which pervades this country, was, to the honour of the present government, abolished.

The canton furnishes France with two companies for the Swiss guards, and several companies in the different marching regiments, according to the capitulation concluded between the King of France and the Catholic cantons, in 1764, for the term of twenty-five years. It has also a regiment in the Spanish service ; of which the colonel and companies of fusiliers can only be taken from the *antient* burghers.

With respect to the militia, all the males from the age of fifteen to sixty, are formed into six regiments, consisting of about 8000 men, exclusive of 240 dragoons, and the corps of artillery, amounting to 600. The colonel of each regiment is always a senator, and the major a member of the Great Council, who is usually an officer retired from foreign service ; the captains are either members of the Great Council or *antient* burghers ; the first lieutenants are generally *antient* burghers, while the rank of second lieutenants and ensigns is usually filled by the principal peasants.

The militia are assembled and reviewed in May and September; and in the spring and autumn exercised in the respective villages by the under-lieutenants and ensigns. According to a plan of defence, regulated in 1668, between the members of the Helvetic Confederacy, the canton of Soleure is bound to furnish 600 for its first contingent; for this supply, 100 men, together with officers, are annually selected from each of the six regiments, who are to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's warning. In case of necessity, this contingent may be doubled or tripled in the same manner. The burghers are incorporated in the company of fusileers, and exercise themselves on Sundays and fairs' days, after divine service, by shooting at marks: government furnishes powder and ball, and distributes prizes to the best marksmen. The remaining inhabitants of the capital and environs, who are not burghers, form a separate body, commanded by the captain of the town; they are also occasionally exercised, and mount guard on the day of St. John the Baptist, when the *Rosengarten*, or the general meeting of the burghers, is assembled.

The sovereign power resides in the Great Council, which consists of a hundred and two members, chosen by the Senate, in equal proportions,

portions, from the eleven tribes or companies into which the *antient* burghers are distributed : and in all instances, the new member is taken from the company to which the last member belonged.

The prerogatives of the Great Council are, to enact and abrogate laws ; to explain obscure parts of the constitution, and make alterations in the form of government ; to levy taxes, declare war, and conclude peace ; to contract alliances, receive appeals in criminal causes from the burghers of the capital, and in civil processes, above the sum of 100 Swiss livres, or £. 6. 3s. ; to confer the *new* burghership ; elect the treasurer, or fourth chief of the republic, from the antient eleven senators ; nominate to the seven exterior bailliages, and to the four Italian governments of Lugano, Locarno, Mendrisio, and Valmaggia, when the appointment belongs to Soleure ; chuse the deputies for the diet of Frauenfeld, and those for extraordinary meetings of the Helvetic Confederacy ; though in both these cases it is the custom to appoint a senator, and usually one of the four chiefs, the reigning avoyer excepted, who is not permitted to be absent during the year of his administration.



There are generally a few supernumerary members in the Great Council, which circumstance proceeds from the method of appointing the bailifs. On the nomination of a bailif, his seat in the Great Council being deemed vacant, is on the next day filled up by a member of the same company in which he is inscribed. At the conclusion of his bailliage he again takes his seat, preserving his antient rank, though considered as a supernumerary, until one of the six members of his tribe makes a vacancy. To be qualified for admission into the Great Council, the candidate must be twenty years of age, an *antient* burgher, and member of the same tribe in which the vacancy happens; but if inscribed in a company different from that of his father, he must, according to a decree passed in 1764, have been a member of that company during a year.

The Great Council assembles ordinarily once every month; and extraordinarily, when convened by the Senate.

The Senate, or Little Council, a constituent part of the Great Council, is composed of the two avoyers or chiefs of the republic, who annually alternate; the chancellor or secretary of state, who has no vote; and thirty-three  
senators

senators drawn from the remaining sixty-six members of the Great Council, divided into eleven seniors, and twenty-two juniors. From the seniors, the two avoyers, the banneret, and treasurer are always chosen. Upon a vacancy among the eleven, the right of election, though residing in the juniors, is always exercised according to seniority : the most antient in rank among the three junior counsellors, of the same tribe to which the late member belonged, is immediately appointed, or rather confirmed, by the juniors. Upon the death or promotion of a junior, his place is immediately filled up by the two avoyers and eleven seniors.

The senate examines and digests all affairs before they are submitted to the Great Council ; is entrusted with the executive power, and care of the police ; receives all appeals in the first instance from the inferior courts of justice ; gives judgment in all civil processes not exceeding the value of a hundred Swiss livres ; and possesses supreme and final jurisdiction in criminal causes, except those in which a burgher of the capital is concerned, who may appeal to the Great Council.

The senate also nominates, either directly or indirectly, to most of the important charges of the republic, and confers the principal ecclesiastical

fiastical benefices; it assembles regularly three times a week, and is convoked on extraordinary occasions by the reigning advoyer. A senator must be twenty-four years of age, member of the Great Council, and drawn from the same company to which the last senator belonged.

The salaries of the principal magistrates are:

The reigning advoyer, about	—	£.363
The advoyer out of office	—	137 10
The Seniors, each	—	46
Chancellor	—	208
Attorney-General, including his		
salary of senator	—	100
The Juniors, each	—	37 10

Government draws its principal revenues, which do not exceed £.12,500 *per ann.* from the following sources. 1. A tax, called the tax for fortifications, laid on the funds of the tribes and monasteries in the town, and on those of parishes in the bailliages. 2. Tythes, and *rentes foncieres* belonging to the state. 3. Tolls. 4. Excise on wine. 5. Interest of money placed out in the canton and in foreign countries. 6. Monopoly of salt. 7. Revenues from the bailliages. 8. Subsidy from France; about



about £. 1108. 9. Sundry small sources, such as demefnes, estates, salaries of vacant benefices, &c.

The principal departments of government are, 1. The tribunals; which comprife the inferior courts of justice, and the Secret Council, consisting of seven members, namely, the two avoyers, the banneret, the treasurer, the first senior senator, the chancellor, and the attorney-general; should any of these persons be absent, their places are supplied by the antient senators, according to seniority. 2. The boards of war. 3. Of the rights, called *droits regaliens*. 4. Of finances, agriculture, and public buildings. 5. Of the police. 6. Of ecclesiastical affairs, charitable institutions, and schools.

The burghers are divided into *antient* and *new*; the antient are alone capable of being members of the Great Council, or enjoying any share in the administration of affairs. The origin of this distinction is dated from 1681. Several foreign families, which settled at Soleure and obtained the right of burghership, being admitted into the Great Council, gave umbrage to those illustrious families, whose ancestors had, by their valour and prudence, laid the foundation of the republic. To prevent the  
farther

farther participation of honours and emoluments, to which they conceived themselves solely entitled, the Great Council confined the offices of government exclusively to those families, which at that epoch enjoyed the rights of burghership, until they were reduced to the number of twenty-five. It was at the same time enacted, that these families and their descendants should be distinguished by the name of *antient* burghers; and that those, who afterwards received the burghership, should be called *new* burghers; and to enforce these regulations, that any burgher who made any proposition contrary to this law, should be banished from the canton, and his goods confiscated.

Besides this exclusive privilege, the *antient* burghers enjoy the sole right of being appointed canons in the chapters of Soleure and Schœnenwerth, and of holding any ecclesiastical benefice in the gift of the Senate. But as there is at present a great deficiency of clergymen among the *antient* burghers, it will probably soon be thought necessary to dispense with this law, and permit the *new* burghers, and all subjects of the canton, to be candidates for vacant livings.

About eighty-five families possess the right of *antient* burghership; and of these, about  
thirty-

thirty-four of the most illustrious supply the members of the Great Council, and fill the various departments of government.

The rights of the *new* burghers consist in nominating and annually confirming the advoyer, the banneret, and *grand sautier*, or lieutenant of the police; but, as they always chuse those persons, who are selected by the Senate, as they exercise this privilege in conjunction with the *antient* burghers, and as, by the edict of 1681, they must retire from the assembly, should there be any opposition; this right of election is little more than a mere formality. In all other instances, excepting in those concerns which relate to government, the *new* burghers enjoy the same privilege as the *antient*, such as freedom of trade and commerce, the property of houses and land in the capital and its district, and are also entitled to hold ecclesiastical benefices in the gift of the chapters and individuals.

The burghers, both *antient* and *new*, are distributed into eleven tribes or companies, each whereof furnishes three senators and six members of the Great Council. Every person may chuse the company in which he inscribes his name; but he cannot afterwards change it. For the purpose of obtaining a place in the  
government



government at an early period, a young noble selects that company in which there is a probability of a vacancy; but should he fix upon one different from that in which his father is incorporated, he must have been received a member during a whole year, before he can be a candidate for admission into the Great Council.

The general assembly of *antient* and *new* burghers, called *Rosengarten*, who meet on the day of St. John the Baptist, for the purpose of electing or confirming the charges of *advoyer*, *banneret*, and *grand sautier*, deserves to be described for its singularity, and will convey to you some idea of those annual elections, or rather confirmations, of the principal officers, which take place in most of these aristocratical states.

This assembly is held in the church of the Cordeliers, and denominated *Rosengarten*, or Garden of Roses, either because a nosegay, which every burgher carries in his hand, was formerly composed of roses, or because this meeting used to be convened in the garden of the Cordeliers, which is said to have been called the Garden of Roses.

About six in the morning, the *avoyer* out of office, the senators, members of the Great Council,

Council, and the *antient* and *new* burghers, assemble in their respective companies. After the repetition of certain signals, the reigning avoyer, accompanied by the chancellor, the secretary of the finances, and several other officers of state, repair, with drums beating and trumpets sounding, from the town-house to the church of the Cordeliers; where, after presenting his offering upon the altar of the Virgin, he seats himself on a throne near the altar. Soon afterwards the senators and remaining members of the Great Council appear at the head of their respective tribes; and having presented their offerings, the avoyer out of office places himself near his colleague on the throne. At the conclusion of a mass accompanied with music, all but the burghers retire, and the doors of the church are closed. The reigning avoyer, with a sceptre in his hand, pronounces an harangue; then delivering up the sceptre and seals, resigns his dignity, and receives the thanks of the assembly, by the mouth of the attorney-general, for his zeal and attention during the year of his government. Next follow, in the same manner, the resignations of the banneret and of the attorney-general; the former of whom is thanked, in the name of the assembly, by the attorney-



general, and the latter by the avoyer who has just resigned.

This ceremony being finished, the two avoyers, bannerets, attorney-general, and antient senators, retire from the choir to another part of the church ; and the chancellor summoning the junior senators into the choir, pronounces the name of each antient senator, and of the attorney-general, and demands, whether the junior senators are pleased to confirm them in their charges for another year. This being obtained, the chancellor and junior senators repair to the assembly in the body of the church, where the chancellor recites the names of the senior senators and attorney-general confirmed by the juniors, and demands the approbation of the whole assembly of burghers. Upon this, the avoyer who has just resigned, and all the senators, except the avoyer out of office and the banneret, come into the church, and take the usual oaths. The chancellor then acquainting the assembly, that they must elect the reigning avoyer ; the avoyer who has just resigned proposes his colleague : the officer of state, called *Grand Sautier*, cries out, “ Let all those who chuse to elect the right noble A. B. reigning avoyer, hold up their hands under oath ;” and immediately notifying his election,

the



the avoyer enters the church, takes the oath from the chancellor, and administers it to the *Grand Sautier*. The election of the banneret is made in a similar manner: having resigned his office, he is proposed to the assembly by the reigning avoyer, and, being accepted, gives his hand to the reigning avoyer, as he never takes the oath but in time of war. The *grand sautier* is likewise recommended by the reigning avoyer, and, re-entering the church, takes the oath to government.

At the end of these elections, several decrees of the Great Council are read, particularly that which relates to the right of *antient* burghership, and the election of the avoyer, banneret, and *grand sautier*; by which it is enacted, that, should any opposition be made to the regular order of appointment, the *new* burghers shall retire from the assembly, and the election be vested solely in the *antient* burghers.

The same magistrates are always re-elected or confirmed in their several places: the avoyer out of office is nominated reigning avoyer; on the death of either of the avoyers, the banneret is of course appointed to the vacant office, and succeeded by the treasurer, after

the formality of a nomination. When the ceremony is concluded, the reigning avoyer, at the head of the Senate, passes through a double line of troops under arms to the town-house, where the first magistrate and the *antient* senators confirm the junior senators; he then returns to his own house, accompanied by the Senate and members of the Great Council, and is complimented, first by the banneret, and afterwards by the chancellor.

From this detail we may conclude, that those authors have erred who call the government of Soleure aristo-democratical, for it is certainly a most complete aristocracy; inasmuch as the supreme government resides in the Great Council, of which the members are exclusively taken from the *antient* burghers; as there are only eighty-one families which enjoy that right, and no more can be added until they are reduced to twenty-five; as of these scarcely more than thirty enjoy any share in the government; and lastly, as the election and annual confirmation of the principal magistrates is confined to the *antient* burghers, should there be any opposition in the general assembly called Rosengarten. The government, however, under whatsoever title it may be classed,

is

is mild and equitable ; and the people are tranquil and contented \*.

\* The truth of this remark was fully proved by the conduct of the people during the effervescence of the Swiss revolution. Although the offices of government were exclusively confined to a small number of persons, and notwithstanding the vicinity to the canton of Basle, where disaffection had made a rapid progress ; yet, a few seditious persons excepted, the inhabitants of the whole canton, both in the town and country, rallied round the old constitution. Even after the French troops were ready to enter the canton, and after the government of Bern had tamely consented to reform their constitution, the people of Soleure manifested an extraordinary dread of innovation.

A printed paper from the agents of France, under the title of the patriots of Soleure, was dispersed, in which, after declaring their resolution to maintain the religion of their fathers, and to preserve their independence and connection with the Helvetic body, they required the union of the citizens of the town and canton, and the convocation of a national assembly.

These insidious propositions excited general indignation ; and on the 6th of February the militia of the canton marched to the town, the artillery was planted on the ramparts, many suspected persons were arrested, and all the inhabitants prepared to defend their liberties to the last extremity.

But the magistrates, intimidated by the fluctuating counsels of Bern, and threatened with the instant approach of the French, declared their resolution to



## LETTER 21.

*Treaties with France — Reflections on Foreign Service.*

THE French embassador to the Helvetic body resides in Soleure, and distributes those annual pensions which the king pays to the Catholic cantons. Louis the Eleventh was the

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adopt the new principles, and summoned representatives of the people to arrange a new constitution. Yet these very representatives, thus convened to alter the constitution, *were positively instructed by their constituents to insist that the antient form of government should be maintained in all its parts.* With a view, however, to conciliate the French, and yet to prevent hasty innovations, a decree was issued on the 11th of February, in the name of the avoyer, great and little councils, and deputies of the towns and country, “ for effecting such alterations in the form of government as should introduce an equality of rights between the inhabitants of the towns and those of the communes.”

This decree was preceded by a solemn oath, taken by all the members of the government and the deputies, “ to maintain inviolate their holy religion, as transmitted

the first French monarch who employed Swiss troops, and granted subsidies to the states, since

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mitted by their forefathers; to defend to the last man, against all enemies, that precious jewel of liberty and independence, purchased with the blood of their ancestors; and acting in the character of free Swiss, never to separate themselves from the Helvetic confederacy; but, on the contrary, to fulfil all the duties contracted in virtue of existing alliances.”

It then abolishes all distinctions between the inhabitants of the towns and country with respect to representation and eligibility to the offices of government, and establishes a committee to arrange with the representatives the new constitution.

It ordains that, in the mean time, the established government should continue to exist provisionally; that it should be respected, and remain in force until the formal establishment of the new constitution.

But the people were so little inclined to exercise their new rights, that no steps were taken to carry the decree into execution, and the dissolution of the ancient government was only effected by the capture of Soleure. The body of the people manifested the greatest ardour. Seven thousand troops co-operated with the army of Bern, and all the forces of the canton would have come forward in defence of their country, had not the post of Lengnau been surprised, the advanced guard at Grange defeated, and Soleure captured.

since considerably augmented by his successors. The perpetual alliance which Francis the First concluded with the Swiss cantons, soon after the battle of Marignano, is considered as the basis of every subsequent treaty, and greatly contributed to increase the power of France; the Swiss infantry aided Henry the Fourth in establishing himself on the throne of his ancestors, repressed the contending factions during the turbulent minorities of Louis the Thirteenth and Fourteenth, and distinguished themselves during the continental wars in which France was engaged, by fidelity, valour, and discipline.

The general alliance between France and the whole Helvetic union, ratified by Louis the Fourteenth, in 1663, was to remain in force during the joint lives of that monarch and his

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The extraordinary circumstances which led to these events are related in the Introductory Chapter.

Schawembourg, in accepting the capitulation, promised security to persons and property; but in defiance of this promise, four and twenty villages in the vicinity were given up to plunder, the inhabitants were disarmed, the arsenals seized, and some of the magistrates, after being paraded round the town in barbarous triumph, were inhumanly put to death.

son



son the dauphin, and for eight years after the death of either. Towards the end of his reign, Louis, on his son's death, proposed to renew the treaty in his own and his successor's name; but the Protestant cantons refusing their consent, it was concluded only with the Catholic cantons, and the republic of the Vallais.

This alliance differed from the former treaties in three essential articles: 1. If France was invaded, the contracting republics permitted an additional levy to be raised at the king's expence, not exceeding sixteen thousand men; 2. if the Helvetic body, or any particular canton, should be attacked by a foreign power, the king engaged to assist them with as many forces as were judged necessary; and 3. should dissensions arise between the contracting cantons, the king was, at the request of the aggrieved party, to employ his mediation, and that failing, he bound both himself and his successor to compel the aggressor to abide by the treaties concluded between the cantons and their allies. This last article, as it authorized the interference of the King of France with the politics of Switzerland, appeared dangerous to many of the Swiss, and inconsistent with that absolute independence,

which they had hitherto prized above all other advantages.

France having long in vain attempted to persuade the Protestant cantons to join the alliance, for the purpose of renewing a general treaty with the whole Helvetic body, at length succeeded, after much opposition. This important league was concluded at Soleure in May 1777, between the king of France on one side, and the thirteen cantons and their allies on the other, to continue in force during fifty years. By this treaty it is agreed, that on the invasion of France the cantons and their allies shall furnish an additional levy of six thousand men; and if the cantons, or any of their allies, are attacked, the king, if required, engages to furnish them, at his own expence, with such succours as may be deemed necessary. That article of the treaty with the Catholic cantons in 1715, which related to the mediation of the king, in case of any disputes between the thirteen cantons, is very wisely omitted.

Before this alliance, none of the Protestant states received pensions from France; but by the sixteenth article, the Protestants of Glarus and Appenzel, and the town of Bienne, agreed to accept *les argents de paix et d'alliance*, as  
these

these subsidies are here called. The acceptance of pensions derogates greatly from that spirit of absolute independence, which all the Protestant states of Switzerland have hitherto affected to profess; and it would have reflected much greater honour on the Swiss nation, had the whole body imitated Zurich, Bern, Basle, and Schaffhausen, in forming the league upon terms of perfect equality, and rejecting the proffered pensions, which give an air of venality to their treaties with France.

It has long been a controverted question, whether Switzerland gains or loses by furnishing troops, according to the tenor of her alliance with France, Spain, Sardinia, Naples, and Holland. It has been urged, that without these supplies to foreign nations, Switzerland would be overstocked with inhabitants, and the natives compelled, like the northern hordes of old, to emigrate for subsistence, as in many parts there is no commerce, and the mountainous tracts cannot supply sufficient provision for the inhabitants. In reply it may be alleged, that the Swiss do not use all the resources in their power: commerce might be more generally cultivated and encouraged; as there is no part of Switzerland far removed from the principal rivers  
and



and great lakes, most of which have a direct communication with the sea.

But, to be convinced that they have not exhausted all the advantages to which they might resort, let them look back on antient Greece, and the immense populousness of so confined a country ; or, what is more open to their observation, let them consider the present state of the United Provinces, and the abundance which those industrious people enjoy on a tract of land snatched from an element perpetually reclaiming its prior occupancy ! But the Swiss need not be reminded of antient or foreign examples : Geneva and St. Gallen are, for their extent, exceedingly populous ; and yet the productions of their lands are by no means sufficient to support all the inhabitants. Appenzel and Vallengin are entirely mountainous ; nevertheless both those districts are remarkably well peopled, and derive, from commerce and industry, all the necessaries of life in great abundance. Indeed Switzerland is so far from being overstocked with inhabitants, that in most of the great towns there is a manifest deficiency ; and in several parts of the country, hands are frequently wanting for the common purposes of agriculture.

These

These reflections seem to prove the mistaken policy of Switzerland, in letting out her troops to foreign states. On the contrary, many circumstances may be alleged in its favour. This practice has tended to keep up the military spirit of the Swiss, even during a state of profound peace, which has now continued, with few interruptions, for three hundred years. The states not only have in constant reserve, and without expence, a body of well-disciplined forces, which they can recal at a moment's warning; but it becomes the interest, for that reason, of those powers whom they furnish with men, not to foment any divisions, which might render the presence of their troops necessary at home. Add to this, that the privileges which the Swiss enjoy in France, and the advantageous articles, relating to commerce, secured to them in all their treaties, seem to strengthen the argument for continuing their military connections with that kingdom.

This argument, however, would be more conclusive, if those privileges were still preserved in the same latitude as was granted by the ninth article of the Perpetual Peace concluded with Francis I. in 1516, and confirmed by several successive treaties. But the case is far otherwise. The immunities have been gradually and almost

imper-

imperceptibly violated : the Swiss merchants were subjected to the poll-tax, and fresh duties, contrary to the tenor of their rights, imposed on their merchandize. During the administration of the Duke d'Aiguillon, the Swiss complaining of these infractions, a negotiation was begun at Soleure with the French ambassador, which produced, however, no other effect than a short letter from the minister, declining to redress the grievances.

On the late renovation of the Perpetual Peace, in 1777, it was expected that this matter of dispute would be amicably adjusted ; and the Count de Vergennes insinuated, that such was the intention of the court of Versailles. Many cantons, and particularly Zurich, were principally induced by these expectations to accede to the alliance ; but not wholly trusting to the promises of the French cabinet, it was insisted that an article explaining and confirming the said privileges should be inserted in the new treaty. The minister, with his usual address, eluded a direct mention of the demanded rights ; but, not to lose the confidence of the nation, at a time when he most wished to obtain it, the king engaged, by the 18th article, to *preserve to the Swiss those privileges and advantages to which they*



*they had a legitimate right, and which they had hitherto enjoyed in France ; and the Swifs agreed to postpone the precise determination of the nature and extent of the said privileges to future conferences, wherein those matters should be regulated with fidelity and equity.*

It is a matter of astonishment that the Swifs were contented with so ambiguous a declaration, or were induced to believe, that the French court would preserve to them their legitimate immunities, in the moment when that legitimacy was a subject of contention. The Helvetic body had soon occasion to repent of their credulity : for, in 1781, the king of France issued an edict irrevocably subjecting the Swifs, who possess lands in France, to the poll-tax, and to all national imposts, and laid the same duties on their merchandize imported into France, as are paid by the merchants of other countries, cheese and linens excepted, which were taxed at a reduced value.

But a still severer blow was levelled against the Swifs in 1786 ; when, notwithstanding the express reservation granted in the Perpetual Peace, the importation of their linens was prohibited in France. The prohibition of this branch of commerce, which furnished employment to so many hands in various parts of Switzerland, particularly

particularly in the cantons of Zurich, Glarus, and Appenzel, and was almost the sole resource of the natives, spread a sensible alarm; but was not productive of serious consequences. After the first surprise and agitation, the industry of the Swiss was not abated; and the linens found their way into France, either by contraband trade, or by contract with the French East-India Company.

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## LETTER 22.

*The Canton of Zug.*

Zug, August 5.

WE yesterday quitted Zurich\*, and walked to Albis, a small village about three leagues distant, situated near the summit of a mountain, much visited by travellers, for the variety and extent of the prospect.

We

\* I have in this part arranged the preceding letters differently from the former editions, and according to the journal of my tour in 1785; though I did not at that time

We fortunately escaped a violent shower of rain, accompanied with a storm of thunder and lightning, which had threatened for some time, and began immediately upon our arrival; but we were well housed; and our host gave us a good supper and an excellent bottle of Muscat wine. We were abroad this morning by five, and had a very agreeable walk to Zug; the weather, which had of late been very sultry, being cooled by the lightning and rain. We passed over the field of battle at Cappel, where Zuingle was slain; regretting this instance of disunion between the Swiss republics, and lamenting the premature death of that great reformer. We pursued our journey through a pleasant country, so thickly planted with fruit-trees, that I could hardly distinguish any other

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time proceed from Soleure to Zurich, yet I have thought proper to resume the order of my first journey in 1776, and to bring the reader back to Zurich, from whence I take my departure, as before, to Zug. The traveller who enters Switzerland at Schaffhausen, and quits it at Geneva or Neuchatel, will perhaps find this itinerary from Zurich to Basle, Bienne, Soleure, and thence to Bern and Lucern, more convenient than that from Zurich immediately to Zug and Lucern; while those who quit Switzerland at Basle will prefer the latter.

fort.



fort. Indeed, we had before remarked the prodigious number of fruit-trees in several other parts of Switzerland, which is in many places almost a continued orchard.

Zug, the capital, stands delightfully upon the edge of a beautiful lake, in a fertile valley, abounding with corn, pasture, and wood. This canton formerly belonged to the House of Austria, and continued faithful to that family when the neighbouring states had formed themselves into independent republics. As it lies between Zurich and Schweitz, the communication between those two cantons was maintained with difficulty; and by this means frequent opportunities were afforded to the House of Austria of invading and harassing the Swiss. Under these circumstances, the six allied cantons, in 1351, laid siege to Zug, which was resolutely defended by the inhabitants; but as Albert duke of Austria was unable to assist them, the town at length surrendered upon the most honourable conditions. The generosity of the conquerors was equal to the courage of the vanquished; for, in consequence of this submission, the canton of Zug was delivered from the yoke of a foreign master; obtained liberty and independence; and was  
admitted

admitted into the Helvetic Confederacy upon equal terms.

The government of this little canton is exceedingly complicated; and the inhabitants of the town have somewhat more influence, and enjoy a greater share in the administration of affairs, than those of the capital burghs in the five other democratical cantons. The supreme power resides in the inhabitants of Zug, Bar, Egeri, and Meutzingen, who assemble yearly to enact laws, and chuse their magistrates. The Landamman, reciprocally elected from each of the four districts, continues three years in office when taken from Zug, and but two years when chosen from each of the three other districts. The general administration of affairs is entrusted to the council of regency, composed of forty members, of whom thirteen are supplied by the district of Zug, and twenty-seven selected equally from the three remaining communities. This council, as well as the Landamman, resides always in the capital \*.

\* Zug was the only one of the small cantons which did not send its contingent to the army, but made a show of resistance to the imposition of the new constitution. On the 29th of April Zug was invested by French troops, surrendered on the 30th, and on the 1st of May accepted the new constitution.

Oswald, one of our old British kings, is the titular saint of this place; and in the church is his statue, with the following inscription:

*Sanctus Oswaldus Rex Angliæ Patronus hujus Ecclesiæ.*

Oswald \* was a king of Northumberland in the seventh century; and is much renowned among the monkish writers for his chastity, piety, and power of working miracles. I have endeavoured to discover the connection between a British king, under the heptarchy, and a small canton of Switzerland; without reflecting, how fruitless is the attempt to give any reason for long-established customs. In the church of Rome, saints are easily transplanted into any soil; and caprice, as well as superstition, may have inclined the inhabitants of Zug to adore a saint, whose name is barely known in his own country.

I am, &c.

\* See an account of Oswald, who was defeated and slain in 624, by Peuda, king of the Mercians, in Penant's Tour to Wales, vol. i. p. 258.









P. Allen Sc.

J. Smith del.



## LETTER 23.

*The Town and Canton of Lucern — General Pfiffer's Model.*

WE took boat at Zug, and being rowed across the lake, which is about three leagues long and one broad, were landed at a village in the canton of Schwitz. From thence we walked to Küssnacht, capital of a bailliage subject to Schwitz, and in our way passed by a small chapel sacred to William Tell, erected on the spot where, it is said, he shot the Austrian governor. At Küssnacht, we embarked upon the lake of Lucern, and were much struck upon our approach with the fine situation of that town, and the noble amphitheatre of mountains, which border the lake.

Lucern, originally subject to the House of Austria, was exposed to the inroads of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, when those cantons had secured their independence. Her commerce to Italy was interrupted; her fairs unfrequented; and her citizens compelled to be continually under arms, in order to protect their territory from incessant depredations.



Under these circumstances, the House of Austria imprudently loading the citizens with exorbitant taxes, Lucern made her peace with the confederate cantons ; and, expelling the Austrian party, entered into a perpetual alliance with Uri, Schwitz, and Underwalden, and became a member of the Helvetic union.

The accession of Lucern gave additional credit and power to the confederacy, and enabled it to resist all the efforts of a great and implacable enemy. In 1386, Leopold duke of Austria invaded the canton with a numerous army ; when the combined troops gained a bloody victory at Sempach, in which Leopold lost his life. In the accounts of this battle, an instance of private valour is recorded, which would have done honour even to a Grecian or a Roman name, and only require the pen of a Thucydides or a Livy to equal in fame the exploits of the most admired heroes of antiquity. The Austrian army, far superior in number, was drawn up in firm battalion, accoutred in heavy armour, and furnished with long pikes, which they presented before them. The Swiss troops were led to the attack in the form of a wedge, in order to open their way into the ranks of the enemy, and to break the solidity of the battalion. The Austrians, nevertheless,

theless, continued impenetrable, till Arnold de Winkelried rushed alone upon the enemy to certain death, and, seizing as many pikes as he could grasp, endeavoured to force through the ranks; but he was killed in the attempt. His patriotic valour, however, was not exerted in vain: it inflamed the Swiss with new courage, and taught the only method of penetrating into the battalion, which they at length effected, after the most desperate efforts.

Leopold himself might have escaped, when his troops first began to give way; but, with a magnanimity worthy of a better fate, he would not survive so ignominious a day, and rushing among the troops of the enemy, was slain. In the arsenal are still preserved his armour, together with a large quantity of cords, with which, according to tradition, he intended to bind the citizens of Lucern. The keeper of the arsenal displayed them to us with the same kind of triumph, as the man, who shows the Tower of London, points out the chains taken on board of the Spanish armada, which Philip the Second is said to have destined for the principal nobility of England.

The government of Lucern is entirely aristocratical, or rather oligarchical. The sovereign power resides in the Council of one hundred,

comprising the Senate or Little Council. The Great Council is the nominal sovereign ; but the whole power actually resides in the senate, consisting of thirty-six members, who are formed into two divisions, exercising the office by rotation. The members of the senate are neither confirmed by the Sovereign Council, nor by the citizens, but are only dependent upon themselves ; the division which retires at the end of six months, confirming that which comes into office. Besides, the vacant places in the Senate being filled by its own body, the power remains in the possession of a few patrician families, and, as the son generally succeeds his father, or the brother his brother, the senatorial dignity may be considered as hereditary.

The administration of the current affairs, the care of the police, the management of the finances, and the whole executive power, reside in the Senate, which sits constantly ; whereas the Sovereign Council is assembled only upon important occasions. The Senate has cognizance of criminal causes ; but in case of capital condemnation, the Sovereign Council is convoked in order to pronounce the sentence ; a practice worthy of imitation ! for the condemnation of a criminal cannot be too maturely weighed ;



weighed ; and great solemnity used in pronouncing the sentence, must make a deep impression upon the minds of the people. In civil causes, an appeal lies from the Senate to the Sovereign Council ; but this must be a mere formality : as, in fact, it is an appeal from the senators in one court to the same senators in another. Indeed, their influence over the Sovereign Council must necessarily be absolute : for they themselves constitute above a third of that body, chuse their own members, and confer the principal charges of government. They nominate also to the ecclesiastical benefices, which are very considerable ; near two thirds of the revenues of the canton belonging to the clergy.

The chiefs of the republic are two avoyers, chosen from the Senate by the Sovereign Council, and confirmed annually. In all elections, the relations of the candidates, to the third degree, are excluded from voting ; and neither the father and the son, nor two brothers, can be members of the Senate at the same time. Excellent institutions, one should think, to prevent the too great influence of family connections ! excellent indeed in theory, but useless in practice : this circumstance proves, that when the spirit of the constitution is oligarchical, all laws enacted for the purpose of counteracting

the power of the nobles, are mere cyphers. In some few instances, however, the authority of the nobles is controuled; for, in declaring war and peace, forming new alliances, or imposing taxes, the citizens must be assembled, and give their consent\*.

### Lucern

\* Lucern, like Soleure, affords a striking example that the subjects of an oligarchical state may be not only satisfied with the government from which they are excluded, but even averse to all innovation. Not all the cabals of the French agents, not all the clamours of the disaffected, not all the exaggerations of the grievances under which they were supposed to labour, could induce the people to think themselves oppressed. They rejected the proffered equality, and it was not without great opposition that the magistrates, rather than the people, on the 31st of January, declared themselves a provisional government, and announced their readiness to accept a democratical constitution. Yet such was the aversion of the people to the new order of things, that the ancient magistrates were invested with the provisional government, and the national delegates did not assemble independently of the provisional government till the 14th of March, when Bern had surrendered to the French arms.

During the progress of the French revolution, Lucern acted with great spirit, and was inclined to join in defence of her own independence, as well as in support of the Helvetic union.

In answer to a summons from Bern, the magistrates, on the 2d of March, replied: "We observe that the demands of General Brune, if acceded to, would endanger not only the liberties of Bern, but the independ-  
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Lucern being the first in rank and power among the Catholic cantons, is the residence of the Pope's nuncio, and all affairs relative to religion

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ence of the Helvetic confederacy. We have therefore determined, with the unanimous approbation of the representatives of the people, that the regiment in the canton of Bern shall march wherever necessity requires, and that a second regiment shall speedily follow." On the third a declaration was sent to Zurich: "We and the people are unanimously resolved to sacrifice our lives and property in defence of liberty against foreign invasion. The alarm-bell will be instantly sounded; and we exhort you to adopt the same resolution: our religion, liberty, property, and every thing that is dear to us, are in danger. We will show ourselves worthy of our forefathers; like free people, we will either conquer or die. These are our resolutions; these are the resolutions of all our people." (Meister, p. ii. p. 8.) But it was now too late; Bern had already surrendered, and the troops of Lucern, disgusted with the insubordination of the Bernese, retreated to the defence of their own territory.

Notwithstanding the surrender of Bern and the desertion of Zurich, a numerous body of peasants demanded the re-establishment of the ancient government, and joined the troops of the small cantons, to resist the entrance of the French; and the whole canton did not acquiesce without much opposition and bloodshed. A corps of French, after a short investment, entered  
Lucern



religion are treated in the annual diet which assembles in this town, composed of the deputies of those cantons. The town contains scarcely three thousand inhabitants, has no manufactures of any consequence, and little commerce. Learning nowhere meets with less encouragement, and consequently is nowhere less cultivated. What a contrast to Zurich! Yet, under these disadvantages, a few persons have made no inconsiderable progress in literature. Among these the most conspicuous is M. Balthasar, member of the Senate, who possesses a library rich in books relative to the history of Switzerland, in which he is extremely conversant, and his publications already given to the world, and those now preparing for the press, prove that he knows how to use them. His works are, for the most part, in the German and Latin tongues; they contain biographical anecdotes of several illustrious Swiss, elucidate various important parts in the general history of Switzerland, but more particularly relate to the canton

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Lucern on the 30th of April, and reduced the people to unconditional submission.

Soon after this event Lucern became the seat of the new Helvetic government.

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of Lucern. His son, a member of the Great Council, deserves to be mentioned for his collection of English books, and the zeal with which he endeavours to propagate a knowledge of our literature. I have also no less satisfaction in adding, that, since my first expedition into these parts, science is more cultivated; that the principles of toleration are better understood and more widely diffused, and that a literary society is established for the promotion of polite learning.

The population of the canton has considerably increased within this century; a sure proof of a mild and equitable government. The inhabitants are principally engaged in agriculture. The southern parts of the canton are chiefly mountainous, and furnish for exportation cattle, hides, cheese, and butter. The northern district is fruitful in corn, which being more than sufficient for the consumption of the canton, there is a constant exportation from the weekly market held in the town, to which the inhabitants of the small cantons resort, for the purchase of that and other necessaries. The overplus for the supply of this market is drawn from Suabia and Alsace. This commerce, which, together with the passage of the merchandize for Italy, is the chief support of the

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town, might be exceedingly improved and augmented, considering its advantageous situation; for the Reufs issues from the lake, passes through the town, and, having joined the Aar, falls into the Rhine.

The cathedral and the Jesuits church are the only public buildings worthy of observation; but are overloaded with rich ornaments, and disgraced by bad paintings. In the cathedral is an organ of a fine tone, and extraordinary size: the centre pipe, as the priest assured is forty feet in length, near three in diameter, and weighs eleven hundred pounds. The bridges which skirt the town, round the edge of the lake, are the fashionable walks of the place, and remarkable for their length; being covered at top, and open at the sides, they afford a constant view of this delightful and romantic country; they are decorated with coarse paintings, representing the histories of the Old Testament, the battles of the Swiss, and the dance of Death.

On our arrival at Lucern, we sent a letter of recommendation to General Pfiffer, a native of this town, and an officer in the French service. He received us immediately, with his usual civility, and showed us his topographical representation of the most mountainous part of Switzerland,



land, which well deserves the attention of the curious traveller. It is a model in relief, and what was finished in 1776 comprised about sixty square leagues, in the cantons of Lucern, Zug, Bern, Uri, Schweitz, and Underwalden. The model was twelve feet long, and nine and a half broad.

The composition is principally a mastic of charcoal, lime, clay, a little pitch, with a thin coat of wax; and is so hard as to be trod upon without receiving the least damage. The whole is painted with colours representing the objects as they exist in nature. It is worthy of particular observation, that not only the woods of oak, beech, pine, and other trees, are distinguished, but also the strata of the rocks marked; each being shaped upon the spot, and formed with granite, gravel, calcareous stone, or such other natural substances as compose the original mountains. The plan is indeed so minutely exact, as to comprise not only all the mountains, lakes, rivers, towns, villages, and forests; but every cottage, every torrent, every bridge, every road, and even every path, is distinctly and accurately represented.

General Pfiffer has already been employed in this work about ten years, with astonishing patience and assiduity; he himself took the plans  
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upon the spot, and laid down the elevations of the mountains in their respective proportions. In the prosecution of this laborious performance, he was twice arrested for a spy, and in the popular cantons frequently worked by moonlight, in order to avoid the jealousy of the peasants, who think their liberty would be endangered, should an exact plan be taken of their country. Being obliged to remain some time upon the tops of the Alps, where no provision can be procured, he generally carries with him a few she-goats, whose milk supplies him with nourishment. Indeed his perseverance in surmounting the difficulties that have arisen in the course of this undertaking, is almost inconceivable. When he has finished any particular part, he sends for the peasants and *chasseurs* who reside near the spot, and bids them examine accurately each mountain, whether it corresponds, as far as the smallness of the scale will admit, with its natural appearance; then, by frequently retouching, he corrects the deficiencies. He takes his elevations from the level of the lake of Lucern, which, according to Saussure, is about fourteen hundred and eight feet above the Mediterranean.

This model, exhibiting the most mountainous parts of Switzerland, conveys a sublime picture  
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of immense alps piled one upon another ; as if the story of the Titans were realized, and they had succeeded (at least in one spot of the globe) in heaping Pelion upon Ossa, and Ossa upon Olympus. The general informed me, that the tops of the alps which crossed Switzerland in the same line are nearly of the same level ; or in other words, that there are continued chains of mountains of the same elevation, rising in progression to the highest range ; and from thence gradually descending towards Italy. He is exceedingly polite and affable to strangers, and ever ready to be of any service to travellers, in pointing out the best roads, and in acquainting them with the places most worthy of observation.

Near Lucern is Mount Pilate, formerly called Mons *Pileatus*, from the Latin word *pilea*, because its top is generally covered with a cloud or cap. This word has been corrupted into *Pilatus*, from which alteration a thousand ridiculous stories have been invented ; among others, that Pontius Pilate, after having condemned our Saviour to death, was seized with remorse, made an excursion into Switzerland, and drowned himself in a lake at the top of the mountain. This corruption of a word, and the absurd legend fabricated from its alteration, will naturally remind



remind you of several fables of similar absurdity, seriously related by the Greek writers; a circumstance which my very worthy and learned friend Mr. Bryant has so amply and ably discussed in his *Analysis of antient Mythology*.

I am, &c.

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HAVING, in three successive visits to Lucern, observed the gradual progress of General Pfiffer's model, and in August 1786 seen it completed; I am enabled to add some particulars, partly from my own observation, and partly communicated by the ingenious artist himself.

The model is composed of a hundred and forty-two compartments of different sizes and forms: they are respectively numbered; and the whole can be taken to pieces and united with almost as much ease (if we may compare great things with small) as the dissected maps, by which children are instructed in geography.

The lake of Lucern, nearly the centre of Switzerland, forms also the centre of the plan, which comprehends part of the circumjacent cantons of Zurich, Zug, Schweitz, Underwalden,  
Lucern,

Lucern, and Bern, and a small portion of the mountains of Glarus. It comprehends a space of  $18\frac{1}{2}$  leagues \* in length, and 11 in breadth; and the dimensions of the model being 20 feet † and a half in length, and 12 in breadth;  $203\frac{1}{2}$  square leagues are represented on a parallelogram of 246 feet, or about two English miles and  $\frac{1}{4}$  by a square English foot. The highest point of the model from the level of the centre is about ten inches; and as the most elevated mountain represented therein rises 1475 toises, or 9440 feet, above the lake of Lucern, at a gross calculation, the height of an inch in the model is equivalent to about 900 feet. And it is a matter of astonishment to observe the stupendous works of nature delineated with such perfect resemblance in so small a compass.

Though I received considerable satisfaction from the first view of this extraordinary performance; yet I again contemplated it with much more pleasure, and still greater astonishment, when I was able to trace many of my various expeditions, and to recognise its surprising accuracy.

\* A league is equal to 2288 toises, or 13,728 French feet, or 14,643 English feet.

† French feet.

The general began this elaborate work at the age of fifty, and though now in his seventieth year, continues his annual expeditions into the alps, with a spirit and ardour that would fatigue a much younger person. It is likewise no less entertaining than instructive, to hear him expatiate, with an agreeable vivacity, on the most interesting objects, which are observed on the model. He kindly supplied me with the following remarks, which I transcribe from my journal. According to a rough calculation, the height on which snow usually remains during summer, may be estimated at 1360 toises, or 8704 English feet, above the level of the sea; and on which it never melts, at 1448, or 9264 feet.

Among the phænomena of nature he mentioned the Rigi, an insulated mountain near the lake of Lucern, twenty-five miles in circumference, and rising to a perpendicular height of more than four thousand feet above the surface of the lake: it is entirely composed of gravel and pudding-stone, and must have been formed by the waters. The Rigi joins to a small ridge of sand-stone running towards Schweitz.

Mount Pilate offers a most singular curiosity. At the elevation of five thousand feet, and in  
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the most perpendicular part, near the pasture of Brunlen, is observed, in the middle of a cavern hollowed in a black rock, a colossal statue, which appears to be of white stone. It is the figure of a man in drapery, leaning one elbow on a pedestal, with one leg crossed over the other, and so regularly formed, that it can scarcely be a *lufus naturæ*. This statue is called Dominic by the peasants, who frequently accost it from the only place in which it can be seen, and when their voices are re-echoed from the cavern, they say, in the simplicity of their hearts, "Dominic has answered us."

It is difficult to imagine by whom, or in what manner this statue could be placed in a situation, which has hitherto proved inaccessible to all who have endeavoured to approach it. About the beginning of the present century, one Huber, a native of Krientz, a neighbouring village, attempted to descend into the cavern by means of ropes let down from the summit of the rock; he succeeded so far as to gain a near view of this singular phænomenon, and was again drawn up in safety. On a second trial, as he was suspended in the air, and endeavoured to draw himself into the cavern by fixing a grapple to

the statue, the cord broke, and he was dashed to pieces. Since that dreadful accident, no one has ventured to repeat the experiment from the same quarter. Another trial to penetrate to the statue was made in 1756, by General Pfiffer and eight persons, from a small opening on the opposite side of the mountain, in which the natives collect a white substance called *mond-loch*, or cream of the moon. As this opening is supposed to communicate with the cavern, the general and his companions crept on their hands and knees, one behind the other, and winding in the bed of a small torrent, through several narrow passages, at length discovered the light of the sun through a remote chasm; but as the distance seemed very considerable, and as the fall of a single stone might have obstructed their return, they thought it imprudent to venture any further, and retreated without effecting their purpose.

## LETTER 24.

*Valley of Entlibuch—Zoffingen—Lake of Sempach  
—Anniversary of the Battle.*

**I**N my first expedition to this country, I had no opportunity of visiting the interior parts of the canton of Lucern, which I afterwards traversed in 1785 and 1786.

On both these occasions I passed from Bern to Lucern, one time along the high road leading through Zoffingen, Surzee, and by the lake of Sempach; at the other, through Langenau, the Emme-thal, and the valley of Entlibuch, a district which, though not usually frequented by travellers, yet highly deserves their attention.

In the 13th century, Entlibuch was subject to the counts of Wolhausen, and came by purchase, in 1299, to the emperor Albert. In the following century it was held as a fief from the House of Austria by several successive counts; till the natives, grievously oppressed by Peter of Torrenberg, in 1386, threw themselves under the protection of Lucern. That republic continued to possess Entlibuch, as a feudal tenure



under the House of Austria, until 1405; when the archduke Frederic renounced all the rights of sovereignty.

For above a century and a half, the inhabitants, inflamed with a desire of independence, and excited by the example of the popular cantons, frequently rose in arms, and attempted to establish a democracy; but without success. Their last insurrection broke out in 1653; since which time they have continued in a state of perfect tranquillity, under the wise administration of Lucern; and have enjoyed, with contentment, the considerable privileges with which they are endowed\*.

The bailliage of Entlibuch extends from the Emme-thal in the canton of Bern, to the bridge near Wertenstein, about fifteen miles in length, and nine in its greatest breadth; and contains 11,000 souls. It is governed by a bailif, who is always a senator of Lucern; he continues in office two years, and generally resides in that capital. The bailliage is divided into three districts; the Upper, or Eschlismat; the Middle, or Shuepfen; the Lower, or Entlibuch: each

\* The peasants of Entlibuch were remarkable for their attachment to the government, and for their decided opposition to French principles, during the late revolution.

of these has its separate courts of justice, from which an appeal lies to Lucern.

That part of the bailliage which I traversed, is a valley, watered by several lively rivulets, winding for some way between two ridges of well-wooded hills, and abounding in picturesque scenery. Afterwards the country was undulating, and the road, which was narrow and rugged, continually ascended and descended through well-cultivated fields of pasture. I passed through several villages, of which the principal were Eschlismat, Shuepfen, and Entlibuch, which takes its name from the rivulet Entle, and gives it to the whole district. These places are small; but the whole country is strewed with cottages, and seems a continued village. The inhabitants chiefly follow agriculture; they rear large quantities of horned cattle, sheep, goats, and swine; make and export cheese in great abundance. Though usually richer than the inhabitants in the other parts of the canton; yet they did not appear so well clothed, or to possess such neat cottages, as their neighbours in the Emme-thal.

The peasants of Entlibuch are much esteemed for their independent spirit, vigour, and strength; remarkable for keenness and vivacity, for great quickness in repartee, for a peculiarity of garb,

and for many striking customs which distinguish them from the natives of the circumjacent districts. Of various usages, which escaped my notice during my short stay among them, I chanced to gain information of one custom, which reminds me of the *Fescennina licentia* mentioned by Horace, that prevailed among the Roman peasants. Two neighbouring parishes send a challenge to each other, and, at the conclusion of the carnival, each dispatches a man, *bedizened* with flowers and shells, called *shrove-monday ambassador*: he rides to the neighbouring village, and reads, or rather sings, two satirical compositions in verse. The one, a general satire against the parish, usually begins by celebrating a period of Swiss history accommodated to the circumstances of time and place, then draws a comparison between the two parishes, giving the preference to his own, either for the superior learning and piety of the priest, the wisdom and impartiality of the president, the industry and spirit of the men, the beauty and chastity of the women, or the education of the children. The second composition consists of a string of epigrams in ridicule of particular persons; recording any scandalous adventures, or ludicrous circumstances, which have happened since the last year. The poet finishes his harangue with expressing a wish, that on  
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the next Shrove-monday the inhabitants may improve, and not deserve such a severe reprimand.

At the conclusion of this lecture, which creates much laughter, the *mock ambassador* returns; and the men of the two parishes repair, with drums beating and colours flying, to an open place, called the *Field of Battle*, followed and encouraged by the inhabitants of their respective parishes. The two *armies* being drawn up in order of battle, the *combatants*, in imitation of the old Swiss custom, kneel, offer up a short prayer, and start up at the sound of the trumpet.

Having formed themselves into two columns of several ranks, they march arm in arm, with uniform step and military attitude; both the foremost lines meet in front, and jostle against each other, being supported and pushed forwards by the hinder files, frequently assisted by the women, until one *phalanx* is broken. The victorious party is dignified with the name of the *Swiss*, and those who gave way are called *Austrians*, in allusion to the ancient animosity between those two powers. The jurymen of the district are present as umpires, and to prevent any violent disputes and quarrels. After the rencounter both parties sit down to table, and the day is concluded with feasting. As

these satirical compositions occasionally created much ill-will between the neighbouring parishes, and the rencounters were attended with various accidents, the government of Lucern abolished the custom; but has lately permitted it to be revived, with certain restrictions calculated to prevent future mischief.

The valley of Entlibuch may be considered as one of those parts which unite the mild and cultivated with the wild and rugged scenery of Switzerland; its acclivities gradually ascend and terminate in Mount Pilate, whose barren top is seen towering above the fertile and well-wooded hills.

Quitting this valley, we crossed the Emme over a covered bridge, admired the romantic position of Wertenstein, a convent of Cordeliers, overhanging the perpendicular banks of the torrent, and passed through a very steep and rocky country to Malters, a small village within a league of the capital. Here being a considerable fair, I stopped and dined at the *table d' hôte*, in company with some gentlemen from Lucern. In walking through the fair, I observed several booths for the sale of artificial flowers, which were purchased by the country girls. With these flowers, and with four bows of ribbands, they ornament their hats, which they adjust obliquely,

obliquely, with a degree of rustic coquetry not unbecoming.

Another district of this canton is that part which I visited in 1786, along the high road leading from Bern to Lucern. I passed the night at Zoffingen, a small town in the canton of Bern. The inhabitants enjoy greater immunities than any other place in that canton; they have their own magistrates, and, what is peculiar, their own courts of justice, both civil and criminal, which decide in the last resort, without an appeal to Bern. A bailif resides there; but his whole employment consists in collecting the tithes. The town contains about two thousand souls.

Near Zoffingen I entered the canton of Lucern, and passed through a narrow valley bounded by a chain of hills remarkable for the richness and variety of the hanging woods. As I proceeded, the valley expanded; I traversed a gently waving country, and descended to Surzee, a small neat town near the lake of Sempach. From thence I coasted the western side of that lake, a small but beautiful piece of water about three miles in length and one in breadth; the grounds on each side slope gently to the edge of the water, and are prettily chequered with wood.



wood. On the opposite banks of the lake, I observed the town of Sempach, celebrated for the battle which established the liberty of the Swiss, and which I have already mentioned in the preceding letter. The anniversary of that battle, which happened on the 9th of July, 1386, is still commemorated with great solemnity, both at Sempach and Lucern, and supplies a copious subject for many poems and ballads in the numerous collection of national songs.

On the anniversary, a large body of persons of all ranks assemble on the spot where the battle was fought; a priest ascends a pulpit erected in the open air, and delivers a thanksgiving sermon on the successful efforts of their ancestors on that happy day, which ensured to their country liberty and independence. At the conclusion of this sermon, another priest reads a description of the battle, and commemorates the names of those brave Swiss who gloriously sacrificed their lives in defence of their freedom. Having exhorted those who are present to pray for the souls of their countrymen, and of the enemies, who fell in that battle, they all repair instantly to a small chapel, where masses are sung for the souls of the deceased. During this service, the  
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people, falling on their knees, pray for their glorious ancestors, either in the chapel, on the walls of which are painted the deeds of the Swiss who immortalized themselves in this conflict, or near four stone crosses which distinguish the place of combat.

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## LETTER 25.

*The Lake of Lucern—Gerisau—Schweitz—Origin of the Helvetic Confederacy—William Tell—Altdorf.*

**T**HE Waldstätter See, or Lake of the Four cantons, is, from the sublimity as well as variety of scenery, perhaps the finest body of water in Switzerland. The upper branch, or the lake of Lucern, is in the form of a cross, the sides of which stretch from Küssnacht to Dallenwal, a small village near Stantz. It is bounded towards the town of Lucern by cultivated hills sloping gradually to the water, contrasted on the opposite side by an enormous mass of barren and craggy rocks. Mount Pilate rises boldly from the lake, and is perhaps

perhaps one of the highest mountains in Switzerland, if estimated from its base, and not from the level of the sea \*. According to General Pfiffer, its elevation above the lake is more than six thousand feet : nevertheless its height above the Mediterranean is trifling, in comparison with that of the alps we are going to visit ; nor indeed does the snow continue all the year upon its summit.

Towards the end of this branch, the lake contracts into a narrow creek scarcely a mile in breadth ; soon after again widens, and forms the second branch, or the lake of Schweitz ; on the western side is the canton of Unterwalden, on the eastern that of Schweitz. Here the mountains are more lofty, and infinitely varied ; some covered to their very summits with the most lively verdure ; others perpendicular and craggy ; here forming vast amphitheatres of wood, there jutting into the water in bold promontories.

On the eastern side of this branch is the village of Gerisau, at the foot of the Rigi : it

\* Soon after the French took possession of Lucern, General Brune erected, with great solemnity, the standard of liberty on the top of Mount Pilate ; thus conferring on the Swiss the shadow, while he deprived them of the substance of freedom.



is the smallest republic in Europe. Its territory is about a league in breadth, and two in length ; situated partly on a small neck of land at the edge of the lake, and partly lying upon the rapid declivity of the Rigi. It contains about 1200 inhabitants : they have their general assembly of burgesseſs, their Landamman, their council of regency, their courts of justice, and their militia. I was informed, that there is not a single horse in the whole territory of the republic, as indeed might well be supposed ; for the only way of arriving at the town is by water, excepting a narrow path down the steep sides of the mountain, which is almost impassable. Gerisau is entirely composed of scattered houses and cottages of a very neat and picturesque appearance ; each dwelling is provided with a field or small garden. The inhabitants are much employed in preparing silk for the manufactures of Basle. This little republic is under the protection of the four cantons, Lucern, Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden ; and in case of war furnishes its quota of men. To the ambitious politician, who judges of governments by extent of dominion and power, such a diminutive republic thrown into an obscure corner, and scarcely known out of its own contracted territory, must appear unworthy of notice ; but the  
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smallest spot of earth on which civil freedom flourishes, cannot fail to interest those who know the true value of liberty and independence, and are convinced that political happiness does not consist in great opulence and extensive empire.

Towards the end of this branch the lake forms a bay, in the midst of which lies the village of Brunnen\*, celebrated for the treaty concluded,

\* On the 31st of April 1793, Brunnen was again distinguished, as the place where deputies from the cantons of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Glarus, unanimously determined to maintain their independence, and to resist the innovations of the French. Even after the subjugation of the other parts of Switzerland, these intrepid mountaineers defended themselves with such spirit, and made such havoc among the French forces, that General Schawembourg engaged by treaty to respect their territory, and accepted their promise to admit the new Helvetic constitution. The French, however, not satisfied with this partial submission, yet unwilling again to encounter the efforts of courage and despair, contrived to disunite the small cantons, and separately to complete their subjugation. They obtained from the diet of Arau a decree for imposing a civic oath of allegiance to the new constitution; but the cantons of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, and Zug, refused compliance. The Helvetic Directory having represented to them the danger of resistance, General Schawembourg accompanied this exhortation with a threat that, unless they complied,

concluded, in 1315, between Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, which gave birth to the Helvetic confederacy. Here I landed, and walked through an agreeable and fertile plain, laid out in meadows, and planted with fruit-trees, to Schwitz, which stands on the slope of a hill, at the bottom of two high, sharp, and rugged rocks, called the *Schwitzer-Haken*. Its position is extremely agreeable. The church, which is a large magnificent building, stands in

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complied, "he would instantly march his troops into the rebellious districts."

Their answer deserves to be recorded for its pathetic simplicity: "Receive, citizen general, from a people ever true to their engagements, who among their craggy mountains have no comfort but their religion and their liberty, whose only riches are their cattle; receive the sincere assurance that they will ever give the French republic every proof of their devotion compatible with their liberty and independence. Accept also, citizen general, our solemn promise never to take up arms against the great republic, and never to join its enemies. Our liberty is our only blessing; nor will we ever grasp our arms except to defend that liberty." This artless remonstrance had no effect; Uri, Schwitz, and Glarus, deeming all resistance unavailing, took the civic oath; and the lower part of Unterwalden, which alone refused, was left to its fate. See the note at the end of the next chapter. *Planta*, p. 456.



the centre of the place; near it the houses are contiguous; but in the other part are prettily dispersed about the gentle acclivities, in the midst of lawns and meadows, and sheltered by groves of trees. The principal object of curiosity in Schweitz is a complete collection of the celebrated Hetlinger's medals, possessed by his nephew. This collection, which he inherited from his uncle, is very valuable, the medals being all of the finest impressions, and several extremely rare. From these medals M. de Mechel published his much-esteemed engravings, to which he has prefixed a life of the artist, who was born in the canton of Schweitz, on the 28th of March 1691, and died in 1771, in a very advanced age.

Having re-imbarked at Brunnen, we soon entered the third branch, or the lake of Uri; the scenery of which is so grand, that its impression will never be erased from my mind. Imagine to yourself a deep and narrow lake about nine miles in length, bordered on both sides with rocks uncommonly wild and romantic, and, for the most part, perpendicular; with forests of beech and pine growing down their sides to the very edge of the water. On the right hand, upon our first entrance, a detached piece of rock, at a small distance  
from

from the shore, engaged our attention : it is wholly composed of stones of the size and shape of bricks, so as to appear quite artificial. The same kind of natural masonry may be observed in the lofty cliffs which impend over this lake, not far from Brunnen. It rises to about sixty feet in height ; is covered with underwood and shrubs, and reminded me of those crags that shoot up in the Fall of the Rhine near Schaffhausen : but here the lake was as smooth as crystal, and the silent solemn gloom which reigned in this place was not less awful and affecting than the tremendous roaring of the cataract. Somewhat further, upon the highest point of the Seelisberg, we observed a small chapel that seemed inaccessible ; and below it, the little village of Gruti, near which the three heroes of Switzerland are said to have taken reciprocal oaths of fidelity, when they planned the famous revolution.

On the opposite side appears the chapel of William Tell, erected in honour of that hero, upon the very spot where he leaped from the boat in which he was conveying as a prisoner to Küssnacht. It is built upon a rock projecting into the lake under a hanging wood : a situation amid scenes so strikingly awful, as must strongly affect even the most dull and torpid imagin-

ation! On the inside of this chapel, the several actions of William Tell are coarsely painted. While we were viewing them, we observed the countenances of our watermen glistening with exultation, as they related, with much spirit and sensibility, the cruelties of Gesler, governor of Uri, and the intrepid behaviour of their glorious deliverer. Indeed I have frequently remarked with pleasure the national enthusiasm which generally prevails in this country, and greatly admired the fire and animation with which the people discourse of those famous men among their ancestors, to whom they are indebted for that happy state of independence they now enjoy. This laudable spirit is continually supported and encouraged by the numerous statues, and other memorials, of the antient Swiss heroes, common in every town and village. Among these, Tell is the most distinguished, and seems to be the peculiar favourite of the common people: the reason is obvious; for his story partakes greatly of the marvellous.

A few years ago a treatise, entitled *Fable Danoise*, was published at Bern; in which the author calls in question the history of William Tell. Though his arguments in general are by no means conclusive, yet he mentions two circumstances which, if true, are convincing proofs,



proofs, that much fiction is interwoven with the whole account. He asserts that the incident of Tell's shooting the apple from the head of his son is not recorded in any of the contemporary historians, although they give the minutest accounts of the governor's tyranny; and that the first writer who takes notice of it is Etterlin of Lucern, who lived in the latter end of the fifteenth century, near two hundred years after the fact is supposed to have happened. Besides, a story of the same kind is related in the Danish annals by Saxo Grammaticus, with scarcely any difference but that of names: Harold king of Denmark supplies the place of the governor of Uri, Tocco that of William Tell; and this event, which is said to have happened in 965, is attended also with nearly the same incidents, as those recorded in the Swiss accounts\*. It is far from being a necessary consequence, that, because the authenticity of the story concerning the apple is liable to some doubts, *therefore* the whole tradition

\* As Saxo Grammaticus is an author but little known, and the passage in question is exceedingly curious, the reader will find it inserted at the end of this volume. It is but justice to add, that some persons question the authenticity of this passage, and suppose it to be spurious.

relating to Tell is fabulous. Neither is it a proof against the reality of a fact, that it is not mentioned by contemporary historians. The general history of William Tell is repeatedly celebrated in old German songs, so remarkable for their antient dialect and simplicity, as almost to raise the deeds they celebrate above all reasonable suspicion: to this may be added, the constant tradition of the country, together with two chapels erected some centuries ago, in memory of his exploits.

The three cantons were so much offended with the author for doubting the exploits of their antient hero, that they presented a remonstrance to the sovereign council of Bern, and the pamphlet was publicly burnt at Uri. In this instance their national prejudices (if they really deserve that name) become, in some measure, meritorious and respectable.

Landing at Fluellen, I had an opportunity of observing that the cross-bow is still much used, as I saw several very young boys, each with that instrument in his hand. Observing a butt at a small distance from the place, I told them, that those who hit the mark should receive a penny for their dexterity. Upon this intimation, three boys took aim successively, two of whom touched the very centre of the butt,

butt, and obtained the prize: but the third missing, I made him shoot till he hit the mark; which, after two or three trials, he performed.

From Fluellen we walked to Altdorf, the capital burgh of the canton of Uri, situated in a narrow vale almost entirely surrounded by stupendous mountains. It contains several neat houses; the tops whereof are covered with large stones, in order to prevent the roofs being carried away by the hurricanes frequent in these mountainous countries.

When the greater part of Helvetia was subject to the empire, the inhabitants of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, had long enjoyed the most considerable privileges, particularly the right of being governed by their own magistrates: the clergy and many of the nobles, indeed, had fiefs and subjects in those respective territories; but the bulk of the people formed several communities almost independent. During the twelfth century, various disputes between the three cantons and the emperors united them more firmly, and they were accustomed, every ten years, to renew formally their alliance. Such was their situation at the death of Frederic II. in 1250. From this period, or soon afterwards, commenced the interregnum in the empire: during that time of anarchy and confu-



sion, the nobles and bishops endeavouring to extend their power, and to encroach upon the privileges of the people, Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, threw themselves under the protection of Rhodolph of Hapsburgh, who, in 1273, being chosen emperor, terminated the interregnum. Rhodolph received a small revenue from these cantons, and appointed a governor, who had cognizance in all criminal causes, but expressly confirmed the rights and privileges of the people.

Rhodolph, some time after his accession to the imperial throne, listened to the ambitious schemes of his son Albert, who was desirous to form Helvetia into a duchy. For this purpose the emperor purchased the domains of several abbeys, and other considerable fiefs in Switzerland, as well in the canton of Schwitz as in the neighbouring territories. The three cantons, alarmed at this great increase of power, obtained a confirmation of their privileges, which, upon the death of Rhodolph, was renewed by his successor Adolphus of Nassau. But when Albert was elected emperor, he refused to ratify their rights, and, in order totally to subdue the people, placed over them two governors, who committed many flagitious acts of tyranny and oppression.

Under

Under these circumstances Werner de Staf-fach of Schweitz, Walther Furst of Uri, and Arnold de Melchthal of Underwalden, planned the famous revolution, which took place January 13, 1308, and restored liberty to the three cantons; and Albert, as he was preparing to attack them, was assassinated by his nephew John of Hapsburgh \*. In 1315, Leopold duke of Austria marched against the confederate cantons, at the head of twenty thousand troops, and, endeavouring to force his way into Schweitz at the pass of Morgarten, received a total defeat from thirteen hundred Swiss posted upon the mountains. If we may believe contemporary historians, the Swiss lost but fourteen men in this memorable engagement, which insured their independence. In the same year, the three cantons contracted a perpetual alliance, which was ratified at Brunnen, and is the grand foundation of the Helvetic Confederacy. Such were the feeble beginnings of a league, since become so formidable by the accession of ten cantons, and by the additional strength of its numerous allies; and it is remarkable, that Switzerland is the only country which, on the one side, has confined the limits of the German

\* See Letter 14.

empire,

empire, and, on the other, has set bounds to the French monarchy \*.

The name of Schweitzerland, or Switzerland, which originally comprehended only the three cantons of Uri, Schwitz, and Unterwalden, was afterwards extended to all Helvetia. It derived that appellation either from the canton of Schwitz, as having particularly distinguished itself in the revolution of 1308, and also at the battle of Morgarten; or because the Austrians called all the inhabitants of these mountainous parts by the general denomination of Schweitzers.

Switzerland was the rock on which the House of Austria split, during more than a century. Blinded with resentment against their former subjects, and anxious to recover their lost domains, the several dukes led in person considerable armies to subdue a nation, whose spirit was unconquerable, and to obtain possession of a country, which was easily defended against the most numerous troops. They neglected several opportunities of aggrandizing themselves in other parts, and, fighting

\* The reader will please to recollect that this letter was written before the fatal progress of the French revolution.



what was more feasible, bent their whole efforts to acquire what in its very nature was unattainable. The consequence of this mistaken policy was, a succession of defeats, attended with a prodigious expence, and the loss of their bravest troops, until at length, convinced of their error, they totally relinquished an attempt, in which they had expended so much fruitless blood and treasure. But although several emperors of that House occasionally made alliances with the Swiss cantons, yet it was not till the treaty of Westphalia that their independence was fully and finally acknowledged by Ferdinand III. and the whole empire.

The government of Uri and Schweitz is entirely democratical, and nearly the same. The supreme power resides in the people at large, who are divided into several communities, from which are chosen the councils of regency. In the *Lands-gemeind*, or general assembly, the Landamman, and the principal magistrates, are elected; and every burgher, at the age of fourteen, in the cantons of Uri and Underwalden, and of fifteen in Schweitz, has a right to vote. The councils of regency in Uri and Schweitz consist each of sixty members, and reside at the capital burghs; in these councils  
the

the executive power is vested, and from their bodies the principal magistrates are chosen.

These two cantons contain, including their subjects, about fifty thousand souls, and in case of necessity could furnish above twelve thousand militia. All the Catholic cantons enjoy considerable subsidies from France. Every burgher, at the age of fourteen, in Uri, receives annually about six livres, or five shillings; the Landamman and the magistrates more in proportion. The canton of Schwitz being for some time discontented with France, withdrew its troops from that service: but this year (1776) the matter has been accommodated; and the king pays annually to every male child of a burgher four livres, commencing from the time of his birth.

The same kind of soil, and the same productions, are common to the two cantons: the whole country being rugged and mountainous, consists chiefly of pasture, produces little corn, and has no vines. We cannot but observe with astonishment, to what a degree of fertility the natives have improved a land, naturally barren, and for which they fought with as much zeal and intrepidity, as if they contended for the richest plains of Sicily or Asia Minor. In these little democratical states, sumptuary-laws

laws are not necessary ; for they scarcely know what luxury is. The purity, or (as some perhaps would call it) the austerity of morals, which still prevails among these people, cannot easily be imagined by the inhabitants of opulent cities ; and I cannot reflect on that affectionate patriotism which so strongly attaches them to their country, without calling to mind that beautiful description of the Swiss peasant, in Goldsmith's Traveller :

*“ Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,  
“ And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms :  
“ And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,  
“ Clings close and closer to the mother's breast ;  
“ So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,  
“ But bind him to his native mountains more.”*

Every step we now advance, we tread, as it were, upon sacred ground ; monuments continually occur of those memorable battles, by which the Swiss rescued themselves from oppression, and secured the enjoyment of their invaluable freedom. I am now indeed in the very centre of civil liberty ; would I could add of religious too ! but the church of Rome is here exclusively established. It must be acknowledged, however, that this intolerant spirit is not wholly confined to the Catholic cantons ; for, in the Protestant districts, Calvinism is alone admitted :



admitted : thus a nation, who prides herself upon her freedom, denies the free exercise of religion to every other sect except that which predominates. Is not this striking at the first principle, and most valuable privilege, of genuine liberty ?

Long as my letter already is, I cannot forbear mentioning a peculiar custom observed in some of these democratical states : every person who is chosen for a bailliage, or lucrative office, is obliged to pay a certain stipulated sum into the public fund. This practice is attended with one ill consequence at least ; as the successful candidate is in some measure authorized to stretch his prerogatives, in order to swell the profits of his charge. Accordingly it is a general remark, that in the common baillies, the bailifs appointed by the popular cantons, are more apt to be guilty of exactions than those of the aristocratical republics.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 26.

*Canton of Underwalden—Sarne—Saxelen—Tomb  
and Character of Nicholas de Flue—Stantz—  
Engelberg—Passage over the Suren Alps to  
Altdorf.*

**I**NSTEAD of proceeding, as in my former tour, from Lucern to Altdorf by water, I made an agreeable excursion to Sarne, Saxelen, and Stantz, in the canton of Underwalden, visited the abbey of Engelberg, and traversed the Suren Alps to Altdorf.

Having dispatched my baggage by water to Altdorf, I walked, in company with M. Meyer, member of the Great Council of Lucern, through a pleasant plain, lying between Mount Pilate and an opposite ridge of hills, to Winke, a village situated on an inlet of the lake of Lucern. There I took boat, and rowing across the inlet, disembarked near Alpnach, in the canton of Underwalden, and continued along a foot-way, which winds through enclosures of rich pasture-land, browsed by numerous herds of fine cattle, and prettily chequered with scattered cottages. Having crossed a small river,

I arrived at Sarne, the capital burgh of that division of the canton called Oberwalden, wherein the *Land-rath*, or supreme court of judicature, assemblies for the purpose of deciding civil and criminal processes. This tribunal is composed of fifty-eight judges, who are chosen by the people, and continue in office for life. In criminal affairs of any notoriety, each of these is empowered to bring into court two individuals ; and this tribunal, thus consisting of a hundred and seventy-four members, assembles in a large open hall in the town-house, and passes final sentence.

At Sarne I embarked upon the Aa, and ascending its stream, entered the lake of Sarne, a piece of water about three miles long, and one and a half broad, pleasantly enclosed between the mountains, and its rising borders richly variegated with pastures and trees. I landed at Saxelen, which stands on its western shore ; a neat village much frequented, as the native place of the celebrated saint and patriot Nicholas de Flue, to whose honour a church has been lately erected. The interior is ornamented in a pleasing style of architecture. Ten elegant columns of black marble support the roof ; they are about twenty-four feet in height, and many of them of a single piece.

They



They were hewn out of a quarry in the Melchthal, about nine miles from Saxelen, and dragged from thence by the peasants, who voluntarily performed this task, which they considered as an act of religious duty : a laborious enterprize, to convey such heavy burdens down steep precipices and over pathless rocks, where they could neither be assisted by horses or oxen !

Under a glass case in the midst of the church, are deposited the bones of this favourite object of national worship, fantastically ornamented, according to the Roman Catholic custom, with gold and precious stones. His real burial-place is still to be seen in a small adjoining chapel ; it is a simple grave-stone, on which his figure is coarsely carved in stone, the work of the age in which he lived. A little above this antient monument is placed another grave-stone, bearing also his figure, executed in later times, less rude, but still of coarse workmanship. On entering this chapel, I observed numerous pilgrims of both sexes, who were kneeling before his tomb, and praying with the greatest fervency ; many, in the ardour of devotion, threw themselves between the two grave-stones, and stretching themselves upon the most antient figure, repeatedly kissed and embraced it.

Nicholas de Flue, this object of national enthusiasm, was born at Saxelen in 1417. Descended from an antient family, he signalized himself in defence of his country, and particularly during the war which the Swiss supported against Sigismund archduke of Austria. He was no less remarkable for humanity than valour. To his countrymen preparing to pillage and burn the convent of St. Margaret near Dieffenhofen, he exclaimed, "If God grants you the victory over your enemies, use it with moderation, and spare those edifices which are consecrated to him." This remonstrance was attended with effect, and the convent was saved from destruction. To the most excellent qualities of the heart and understanding, to great political sagacity, he added the exterior graces of figure, dignity of character, and the most winning affability. Raised by his countrymen to high employments in the state, he repeatedly declined the office of landamman from motives of delicacy, because he disapproved the principles of the governing party. At length, hurried away by his detestation of evil, and a zeal for monkish devotion, he quitted his family in the fiftieth year of his age, and, retiring from the world in a fit of gloomy superstition, turned hermit. The place of his retreat was at Ranft, a few

a few miles from Saxelen, where he built an hermitage and a small chapel, and practised all the severities required by that austere mode of life with the strictest observance.

But the flame of patriotism, although smothered in his breast by an ill-directed zeal for mistaken duties, was not extinguished; and he was the happy instrument in rescuing Switzerland from the impending horrors of civil discord. At the conclusion of the war with Charles the Bold, Friburgh and Soleure having contracted an alliance with Zurich, Bern, and Lucern, the treaty was considered by Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glarus, as a breach of the former union. After various disputes and fruitless conferences, the deputies of the eight confederate cantons assembled, in 1481, at Stantz, in order to compromise the differences.

Both sides were so heated with mutual animosities, that the deputies were on the point of separating without effecting a reconciliation, and a civil war appeared inevitable. In this crisis of affairs, de Flue no sooner heard of the public dissensions, than his patriotism prevailed over his superstition; and he quitted his unprofitable hermitage, to exert those active and public virtues, the lowest of which singly outweighs whole years of useless mortification. Accord-



ingly this extraordinary man, though in the 64th year of his age, travelled during the night, and arrived at Stantz on the very morning in which the deputies were preparing for their departure. He earnestly conjured them to remain; and, having prevailed upon them once more to assemble, he so forcibly represented the destructive consequences of disunion, that they chose him arbiter of the dispute. By his sole mediation all differences were amicably adjusted, and, by his advice, Friburgh and Soleure were instantly received into the Helvetic Confederacy: such was the effect of his persuasive and conciliatory eloquence! Having thus happily composed the public dissensions, he returned to his hermitage, where he died, in 1487, in the 70th year of his age, regretted and esteemed by all Switzerland. Such a general opinion of his extreme piety prevailed among his contemporaries, that the bigotry of those times ascribed to him an exemption from the common wants of human nature.

In the register of the church of Saxelen, the following notice is inscribed for 1485, the year antecedent to his death. “ In 1417, Nicholas  
“ de Flue, a saint, was born in the parish of  
“ Saxelen; who afterwards retired into a desert  
“ called Ranft, where God sustained him during  
“ eighteen

“ eighteen years, without eating or drinking  
“ for a long time, namely when this was  
“ written ; and he is now in good estate, and  
“ of holy life.”

On his tomb is inscribed : “ Nicholas de  
“ Flue quitted his wife and children to go into  
“ the desert : he served God nineteen years and  
“ a half without taking any sustenance. He  
“ died 1487.”

This frivolous epitaph strongly marks the bigotted spirit of that dark age in which it was composed : the narrow-minded author, totally overlooking the patriot in the hermit, saw nothing so truly meritorious in the life of the deceased, as the suppression of those social energies which dignify human nature, in order to practise the debasing austerities of a superstitious religionist. He ought to have inscribed, “ To the memory of Nicholas de Flue, who quitted his hermitage to appear in the world ; who restored peace and harmony to the republics of Switzerland, and who served God by serving his country.”

From Saxelen we intended to visit Ranft, de Flue's hermitage, and from thence to proceed down the Melchthal and over the mountains to Engelberg ; but as the evening was already

beginning to close, we durst not venture along so difficult a passage, which would have employed us at least five hours; we thought it, therefore, most prudent to continue our route towards Stantz. We followed the footpaths, which wind agreeably, sometimes through forests, sometimes over the fields and meadows; and passed through a fertile but wilder and more romantic part of the canton, than that which we traversed in the morning. We continued for some way at the foot of the Stantzberg, crossed a small plain formerly a lake, in which staples for mooring vessels are occasionally discovered; and, in about three hours after our departure from Saxelen, arrived at Stantz, in the dusk of the evening.

About three miles from Stantz is a small wood called the *Kern-wald*, which we traversed in our route from Saxelen; it would not be worthy of mention, did it not separate the canton into two divisions, called \* *Oberwald* and *Underwald*. Formerly the whole canton was under the same general administration; but disagreements arising between the inhabitants of the two districts, they have since formed

\* Above the wood, and Below the wood; *wald* in German signifying a wood.



two republics, and have each their *lands-gemeind*, or general assembly, their landamman, and council of regency: for the management of external affairs, there is a joint council, chosen equally by the two divisions; at the Helvetic Diet they send but one deputy, and regulate their vote by mutual consent. Stantz is the seat of civil and criminal judicature, and it is worthy of remark, that every male of the age of thirty is permitted to give his vote for the acquittance or condemnation of a criminal.

Stantz, the capital of Underwalden, is situated in a beautiful plain of pasture, about two or three miles in breadth, at the foot of the Stantzberg, and at a little distance from the lake of Lucern. The town and environs, delightfully sprinkled with numerous cottages, are extremely populous, containing, perhaps, not less than five thousand souls. The church is a tolerably handsome building, and is decorated in the inside with ten black marble pillars of large dimensions, but not so beautiful as those at Saxelen. The women in these parts dress their heads in a singular manner, and extremely unbecoming: they wear black-beaver cocked hats, similar to those of the men, with

black ears to their caps, which almost conceal their hair \*.

The

\* This tranquil and happy district became the scene of unexampled carnage, and the handful of natives who ventured alone to resist the aggression of the French were almost wholly exterminated. The inhabitants of Schweitz and Underwalden, being required to take the civic oath, sent deputies to Lucern, and afterwards to Arau, who appealed to the stipulations of the treaty granted by General Schawembourg. They were received with insult and indignity, and returned with the following answer: " You, as well as the other cantons, must take the oath ; and you must further give up to us, alive or dead, nine of your principal leaders, and among them three of your clergy. Many hundreds more shall share the same fate. The consequences of your obstinacy shall be held out as an example to the whole world."

Intimidated by this threat, Schweitz and the upper district of Underwalden complied with the injunction ; but the message of the Swiss Directory having been read to a general assembly of the lower district, excited indignation and horror ; and they unanimously resolved to be buried in the ruins of their country rather than surrender their fellow-citizens in so dishonourable a manner. About 1500 took up arms, and, without the smallest hope of foreign assistance, prepared to resist the whole force of the French, and to die rather than survive their expiring liberty. Having entrenched themselves on the borders of the lake, and at the entrance of the valley of Stantz, with their women and children, they firmly waited

The next morning the abbot of Engelberg, previously informed of our intended visit,

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waited the attack. The French advanced to the assault in separate columns, some crossing the lake in armed vessels, and others marching over the mountains.

On the 3d of September hostilities commenced; the French were repulsed in different onsets; on the 9th two vessels being sunk, with 500 men, the French were intimidated, and refused to proceed, until a party, encouraged by the promises, and urged by the threats of Schawembourg, disembarked and forced the entrenchments. At the same time two other columns landed at different points, and the corps rushing from the mountains, fell upon their rear. The small but heroic band, shut up in a narrow defile, and surrounded by a force ten times their number, sustained the assault with unparalleled courage.

“Then began,” says an eye-witness of this desperate conflict, “the battle and the carnage. Our rustic heroes fire on every side, fight foot to foot, rush among the enemies’ ranks, slay and are slain. These mountaineers were seen pressing French officers to death in their nervous arms; old men, women, and children, roused by the noble example, and catching the enthusiasm of their sons, husbands, and fathers, appeared throwing themselves into the midst of the French battalions, arming themselves with clubs, pikes, pieces of muskets, nay the very limbs of the human body, strewing the ground with carcases, and falling with the satisfaction of having fought to maintain their native land free from a foreign yoke.”

The



visit, politely sent horses to Stantz; and we rode through a fertile valley, enclosed between the Stantzberg and a chain of hills, until we arrived at Graffen-ort, a small villa belonging to the abbot, about two leagues from Stantz. Here we began to ascend along a road winding by the side of a steep precipice, and through "*unfanned forests*" of beech intermingled with poplar, mountain ash, Spanish chestnuts, and pines, the torrent Aa impetuously foaming in a stony channel, and forming a succession of cataracts. The

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The French, exasperated with this incredible resistance, put to the sword not only their opponents on the field of battle, but involved all whom they met in indiscriminate slaughter, and the valley from one end to the other became a prey to pillage, flames, and carnage.

Two hundred natives of Schweitz, hearing the cannonade, were ashamed of having deserted their brethren, and hastily arming themselves, forced the post which the French had established at Brunnen, and towards the end of the day approaching Stantz, saw the conflagration, which showed the fatal event of the action. They devoted themselves to revenge the fate of their countrymen, and after exterminating above 600 of their enemies, fell on the field of battle.

This was the last conflict of expiring liberty in Switzerland; had the united Swiss acted with equal spirit, the country would yet have been free.

The Fall of Underwald, by an eye-witness, Mallet, vol. ii. p. 40.

wild.











wild horrors of the circumjacent rocks, the incessant roaring of the waters, and the solitary gloom of the forest, reminded me of Gray's beautiful Ode on the Grande Chartreuse, in which he describes similar scenes with a sublimity and truth which every person of taste, who travels through these magnificent regions, must feel and admire :

*Per invias rupes, fera per jûga,  
Clivosque præruptos, sonantes  
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem.*

Issuing from the dark forest, we descended for a little way, and unanimously broke into an exclamation of surprise and delight, as we suddenly looked down upon a picturesque plain of an oval shape beautifully wooded, watered by several lively streams, enclosed within a circle of gentle hills, and terminated by a majestic amphitheatre of “*cloud-capt alps* ;” toward the extremity of this plain, the abbey, a large quadrangular building of stone, is situated, at the foot of the *Engelberg*, or Mountain of *Angels*, from which the whole district takes its name. On alighting from our horses, the abbot politely received and conducted us into a large saloon, where soon afterwards dinner was served with all the plenty of feudal times, and all the comforts of the present age. The  
company

company at table consisted of the abbot, five or six benedictines, ourselves, and our servants, who, according to the custom of the place, sat down to the same hospitable board with their masters. This intermixture of society, the politeness of the worthy abbot, and the facetious cheerfulness of one among the fathers, rendered the repast as agreeable as it was uncommon. After dinner we visited the library, which contains about ten thousand volumes; and, among many rare editions, above two hundred printed in the fifteenth century. I noticed a much larger collection of modern historical and miscellaneous works, than are usually found within the walls of a monastery, which does honour to the taste of the abbot, and proves him a warm friend to polite literature.

The weather being fine and clear, I strayed about the environs, admiring the scattered hamlets, the beautiful tufts of wood, and the lively streams which murmur through the plain: of these, one called the Melt-bach, which I observed issuing copiously from the ground, begins to flow on the first melting of the snow in the month of May, and ceases towards the end of September, and the Griesen-bach, that rises at the foot of Mount Blake, runs only from mid-day to the setting

setting sun. Several other torrents, that pour down from the neighbouring glaciers, and numerous springs that burst from the ground near the abbey, help to supply the Aa, which rushes from the Suren alps, and, swelled with these tributary waters, hastens to throw itself into the lake of Lucern. The amphitheatre of cloud-capt mountains, is formed by the Melkleberg, the Arniberg, the Blakeberg, the Spitze-stock, the Suren alps with their brown peaks boldly rising from the bosom of the snow, the Engelberg towering in naked majesty, and, the most elevated and most beautiful in the whole chain, Mount Titlis, supporting on its top an immense glacier.

About seven in the afternoon we sat down to supper; in the midst of the repast we were suddenly struck with an awful thunder-storm, which, though it could not be called the music of the spheres, or such as, according to the legends of the abbey, was performed on the top of the Engelberg, by a choir of angels, at the consecration of the convent; yet produced a most sublime effect, when re-echoed by the surrounding mountains.

The abbot, chosen by a majority of sixteen benedictines, who compose the chapter, is sovereign lord over the land of Engelberg, a tract



tract of country about sixty miles in circumference, and under the protection of Lucern, Uri, Schwetz, and Underwalden. The small plain in which the abbey is situated is the only habitable part of this district, and contains fifteen hundred souls; the remaining portion, being entirely mountainous, affords in summer a retreat to numerous herds of cattle. The abbot, to whom we were indebted for so polite a reception, is Leodigar Saltzman, a native of Lucern, who, since his elevation to his present dignity, has been a kind and indulgent master: finding many of his subjects extremely poor and indolent, he has excited them to industry; and, in order to assist them during the winter months, when agriculture is suspended, employs them in winding silk, which he imports from Italy. He possesses very considerable power, which renders him nearly absolute; in all criminal cases he arrests and imprisons; appoints the person who examines; can order, if he thinks it necessary, the infliction of torture, and can pardon or mitigate the sentence given by the tribunal of the country, called *landsgericht*. In civil causes his influence is very considerable; he appoints, from twelve candidates selected by the people, the seven judges, who, in conjunction with the *thalamman* and *statthalter*, form the *landsgericht*,

*landsgericht*, which decides in the first resort: he can also displace them if he pleases, and absolutely nominates all the judges of the *geistlichen-gericht*, or ecclesiastical court, which receives appeals from the decisions of the former tribunal. His power is restricted in the following instances. If he is engaged in a lawsuit with an individual, the award of the country tribunal is final, and if with the whole community, the question is decided by the four cantons of Lucern, Uri, Schweiz, and Unterwalden.

His revenues amount to about £. 5000; and are derived partly from tithes of certain estates in the free bailliages of Switzerland, and from a few feudal rights, but principally from the exportation of cheese. Beside those which are made on the pastures belonging to the abbey, he purchases others from the peasants of his little territory, and disposes of the whole on his own account. About eighteen hundred cows, including the cattle of the convent, are possessed by the natives of Engelberg, and annually supply milk for about 10,000 cheeses, each weighing from 25 to 50 pounds, and selling, on an average, for fifteen florins, or one pound five shillings per hundred weight: and it may be calculated that the abbot circulates annually

to the value of £. 4000. This revenue, however, cannot be considered as his own private property; for he pays the current expences of the abbey\*.

Several

\* On the 1st of April 1798 the respectable abbot resigned his sovereignty, in a letter to Mengaud, the French resident in Switzerland.

“ Citizen Minister,—We fulfil a duty highly agreeable to us, in forwarding to you the enclosed act, in which we voluntarily re-establish the people of the valley of Engelberg in their sovereign rights. We flatter ourselves that you will acknowledge in this conduct the purity of our intentions, and our extreme eagerness to render ourselves worthy of the friendship of the French republic. We hope, Citizen Minister, that you will make our sentiments known to the Directory of the Great Nation, and recommend us to the continuance of its esteem and kindness.

“ Health and respect!

(Signed) “ LEODEGARIUS Abbot, and  
“ MAURICE MULLER Prior.”

Mengaud returned this insulting answer, which announced the dissolution of their community:

“ I have read with pleasure your letter of the 1st of April, in which you announce the re-establishment of the people of the valley of Engelberg in their sovereign rights. I commend this natural restitution of antiquated usurpations, eternally contrary to those imprescriptible rights of nature, to the enjoyment of which men are indiscriminately called. This acknowledgment, on your part, of a sacred and unalienable principle, is without  
doubt



Several ineffectual expeditions having been made towards attaining the summit of Mount Titlis, the most elevated mountain in these parts, and perhaps scarcely inferior to the Schreckhorn and Jungfrauhorn; it was for a long time considered as inaccessible: but, as tradition reported, that, in the year 1739, three men had ascended, Freygrabend, a native of Engelberg, and physician to the abbot, a few days after my departure from the convent, succeeded in a similar attempt. The following account of this expedition is extracted from a German letter, written by the physician himself to a friend at Lucern.

“Early in the morning on the 14th of September, the weather being fine and clear, I set out with eleven companions, among whom were Jerom Dopler and Conrad Stocher, two friars of the Convent. About two in the morning, after ascending through Gerschne, and Unter and Ober-laub, we reached, at break of day,

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doubt of great value; and under this point of view, citizen monks, you are commendable; but be still more so. Do not wait till philosophy expels you from the asylum of indolence and inutility. Quit the livery of superstition, return to society, and display virtues sufficient to bury in oblivion those years which have been consecrated to monastic nullity.” *Moniteur*, 8th Floreal.

the summit of the Laubergrat. Here we enjoyed a fine view over the canton of Underwalden, the lake and canton of Lucern, the free bailliages, and the canton of Zug. Having taken some refreshment, and reposed ourselves a quarter of an hour, we put on our crampons, and pursued our route, eager, like the giants of old, to scale the steep sides of Mount Faulblatten. We continued about an hour along the piked ridge of this mountain, tottering by the side of tremendous precipices, and twice climbing an ascent almost perpendicular. We could not observe any trace of the smallest vegetation. Having gained the highest point of the Faulblatten, we arrived at a glacier, which being fortunately covered with fresh snow, rendered the ice less slippery than usual.

“ Hitherto our course was attended with some danger, but from hence we ascended, and reached, with little difficulty, the top of the Titlis, called *Nollen*. But here we were obliged to cross a deep chasm, and to mount the sides of the ice, which were as perpendicular as a wall, by forming steps for our feet with the iron spikes of our poles: below us was a valley of ice about sixteen miles in length, descending rapidly towards Oberhasli. It was now about ten in the morning, and the sun was extremely bright.

Having walked a few paces, the prospect was on all sides open and unbounded. This sublime, yet dreary scene, though it surpasses all description, made an impression on my mind which I shall never forget.

“ Here the painter and poet would find ample and endless employment, if the colours of the painter, and the conceptions of the poet, could resist the effects of the extreme cold. The first objects which caught our attention, were the alps of the Vallais, Bern, and Savoy, with their glaciers and vallies of ice; a majestic and tremendous scene. Among numerous mountains which rose before us, Mont-Blanc, though at some distance, reared its head above the rest; near us towered the Schreckhorn, Wetterhorn, and Jungfrauhorn, but less elevated in appearance than the point on which we stood. Below us we observed a valley of ice about two miles in breadth, and of such immense length, that one extremity seemed to join Mont-Blanc, and the other to be closed by the Titlis. To the east, the Rothstock, the Plangen, and the mountains of Uri, neither so wild nor so elevated as those to the south; and towards the north-west, the eye reposed itself over the less dreary and more cultivated parts of Switzerland, as far as the borders of Alsace and Suabia. Immediately



below us we noticed the abbey; and heard the sound of several mortars, which the abbot ordered to be fired as a signal that we were also seen: by means of a small telescope I observed the fire and smoke, and five minutes elapsed before the sound reached us, not in a straight direction, but re-echoed between the surrounding rocks. We had proposed to kindle a fire, and to let off some hand-grenades, but the cold prevented us from striking fire. Not being able to support its extremity more than three quarters of an hour, although the sun shone very bright, and we kept ourselves in continual motion, we placed a black flag on the highest point.

“ We were as fortunate in descending as in mounting. We came to the Unter-Titlis at half past eleven; to the Laubergrat at one, where we again took some refreshment, and having let off our grenades, reached the abbey at five in the afternoon. We felt no permanent inconvenience from this expedition; our faces only were swelled, and our skins peeled, from the reflection of the sun, and for some hours after my return to Engelberg, I lost my sight and my hearing, both which however I soon recovered. Undoubtedly the Titlis is the highest mountain in Switzerland, excepting Mont-Blanc, to which it is not much inferior.”

It

It is to be regretted, that this expedition was only a mere effort of curiosity, and that the ingenious physician carried with him neither thermometer nor barometer. His assertion that the Titlis is higher than any mountain in Switzerland, will, for this reason, and without farther proofs, admit of much doubt; its elevation, though very considerable, must be greatly inferior to that of Mont-Blanc, as will appear by considering that the expedition from the plain of Engelberg to the top of the Titlis was performed in eight hours; whereas Dr. Paccard and James Balma employed fifteen in attaining the summit of Mont-Blanc; and the place from which they took their departure is probably much higher above the level of the sea than the valley of Engelberg.

August 25.

Travellers, in going from Engelberg to Altdorf, usually return to Stantz or Buochs, embark on the lake of Lucern, and proceed the rest of the way by water; but as I had already visited those places, I preferred following the route across the mountains. The morning being obscure and rainy, we were detained till nine o'clock, when the weather clearing up I set out, in company with Messrs. Balthazar and Meyer, of Lu-

cern. Passing through the plain of Engelberg, we admired, on our left, a fine waterfall, which precipitates itself from Mount Engel, and in about a league arrived at a cottage belonging to the abbey, where we found two peasants employed in making cheese, and regaled ourselves with some excellent cream. From this point we mounted gently by the side of the Aa, leaving on our right the high Suren alps, whose pointed tops occasionally burst forth amid the clouds and vapours; about a mile from the cottage we quitted the abbot's horses, walked up a gradual ascent, passed a superb cataract of the Aa, and reached a chapel noted in these parts for a small bell, which, according to tradition, was the gift of a French traveller. Near this chapel we observed a hut, which is in the canton of Uri, from whence the ascent was steeper, but not difficult; we crossed many drifts of snow, and were incommoded by a keen wind and frequent showers of sleet, hail, and rain. At length, in about four hours after our departure from the abbey, we reached a cross planted on the highest point; from this elevation we should have enjoyed a most superb view, greatly admired by travellers, on one side towards Uri and the chain of the St. Gotthard, and on the other towards Engelberg and the



the lake of Lucern, had not the weather totally obscured the prospect. From this point the Titlis is much extolled for its beautiful and majestic appearance.

From hence we descended the Enkeberg into a most barren region, amid a harvest of pointed rocks, and over numerous drifts of snow, and fallen fragments of stone, intermixed with small patches of russet herbage, which contributed to increase the dreariness of the scene. Our descent continued above an hour and an half, along a bare slippery rock of slate, or in the beds of torrents, or over large masses of ice and snow, when we observed several huts scattered in a small plain. From their first appearance we concluded that we should presently reach them, but the precipices were so steep, the paths so rugged, and the distance so much greater than we at first imagined, that it employed us above an hour and an half.

The little valley, in which these huts are situated, is called *Wald-nacht Alp*, contains a small quantity of underwood, and feeds a hundred and thirty-three cows, beside a few sheep, goats, and hogs. The peasants employed in tending the cattle and making cheese, usually arrive on the 20th of June, and remain about a hundred days. The owner of the hut in which we dried

our clothes, makes every day, during that period, two cheeses of twenty-five pounds each, from the milk of eighteen cows.

Having taken some refreshment, and recovered our fatigue, we continued along the valley, through some groves of poplars and firs, and at its furthest extremity came to a single cottage seated on an eminence, the first house on this side which is habitable in winter. A little further we had a prospect of the town and environs of Altdorf; the fertile vale of Schackeren, which, though a very steep ascent, yet from this elevation seemed a level plain; the lake of Uri, which looked like a small rivulet; and the distant mountains reaching beyond the St. Gothard. The descent, through rich fields and pastures, was extremely steep and tedious, as the grass was rendered slippery by the rain, and we did not arrive at Altdorf till seven in the evening, wet and exceedingly fatigued, but much pleased with our expedition. This passage from Engelberg to Altdorf is estimated at seven leagues. A *chasseur* may perform it in four hours; a traveller accustomed to mountains, in six; and a person unused to such fatigue, will require eight or ten hours.

## LETTER 27.

*Valley of Schoellenen—Devil's Bridge—Valley of  
Urseren—Valley and mountain of St. Gothard—  
Sources of the Tesino and Reufs.*

St. Gothard, Aug. 9.

SWITZERLAND is a most delightful country, and merits the particular observation of the traveller, as well for the diversity of the governments, as for the wonderful beauties of nature : but the impositions of the innkeepers, and the difficulty of procuring horses\*, are inevitable

\* I would recommend to all travellers, who traverse the canton of Uri in order to visit the alps, either to hire horses at Lucern, or to bespeak them against their arrival at Altdorf. If we fortunately had not taken the latter precaution, we should have found no less difficulty in procuring horses in 1785, than in 1776; notwithstanding all the good offices of our landlord at the Black Lion, who, knowing that I was the author of Letters on Switzerland, was extremely anxious to wipe away certain aspersions, which, in the beginning of this letter, seem to glance at his native town. The two Mr. Cliffords, whom we met at Engelberg, and who, to our great satisfaction, accompanied us in our tour as far as Geneva, were



inevitable taxes for the enjoyment of these its delights. These little inconveniences, however, should be borne with patience and good humour; nor will I trouble you with any splenetic complaints of those unpleasant circumstances which must occur to all travellers.

Quitting Altdorf, we passed at first through a fertile plain of pasture, in which the inhabitants were employed in mowing the second crop of hay, and in about nine miles began ascending. The road winds continually along the steep sides of the mountains, and the Reufs sometimes appeared several hundred yards below us; here rushing a considerable way through a forest of pines, there falling in cascades, and losing itself in the valley. We crossed it several times, over bridges of a single arch, and beheld it tumbling under our feet, in channels which it had forced through the solid rock; innumerable torrents roaring down the sides of the mountains, which were sometimes bare, sometimes finely wooded, with here and there some fantastic trees clothing the sides of the precipice, and half obscuring the river.

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were obliged to pursue their journey on foot, not being able to procure more than one horse, which was appropriated to their baggage.

The

The darkness and solitude of the forests, the occasional liveliness and variety of the verdure, immense fragments of rock blended with enormous masses of ice; crags of an astonishing height piled upon one another, and shutting in the vale;—such are the sublime and magnificent scenes with which this romantic country abounds.

Near Wafen is the valley of Meyen; the torrent that dashes through it, and falls into the the Reufs, forms a series of grand cataracts, which the traveller may enjoy by venturing to the edge of the precipice, and supporting himself against an impending pine, that overlooks the gulf.

We set out this morning early from Wafen, a small village where we passed the night; and continued advancing for some way up a rugged ascent, through the same wild and beautiful tract of country, which I have just attempted to describe. We could scarcely walk a hundred yards without crossing several torrents, that rolled with violence from the tops of the mountains. This being one of the great passes into Italy, we met many pack-horses laden with merchandize; and as the road in particular parts is very narrow, it required some dexterity in the horses to pass one another without jostling.

These

These roads, impending over precipices, can fail of inspiring terror to travellers, who are unaccustomed to them; more particularly as the mules and horses do not keep in the middle of the track, but continue crossing from the side of the mountain towards the edge of an abyss, then turn assant abruptly; thus forming, if I may so express myself, a constant zig-zag.

Thus far the country appeared to be tolerably well peopled; we passed through several villages situated towards the bottom and less narrow part of the valley; the sides of the mountains were occasionally strewed with cottages, covered with forests, or enriched with pastures. Still continuing to ascend, the scenery beyond Wafen suddenly changing, became more wild and desert; there were no traces of trees, except here and there a stubbed pine; the rocks were bare, craggy, and impending; not the least sign of any habitation, and scarcely a blade of grass to be seen. We then came to a bridge thrown across a deep chasm over the Reufs, which formed a considerable cataract down the shagged sides of the mountain, and over immense fragments of rock which it has undermined in its course. This bridge is called *Teufels-bruck*, or the Devil's bridge. As we stood upon the bridge, contemplating the fall  
and



and listening to the roar of the cataract, we were covered with a spray, which the river threw up to a considerable height. These are sublime scenes of horror, of which those who have not been spectators, can form no perfect idea: they defy the representations of painting or poetry\*.

Not

\* Many travellers have been disappointed on the *first* view of the Devil's bridge. It ought therefore to be remarked, that the bridge itself, though of difficult execution, is a trifling object, and not so stupendous as many others in Switzerland; and that it is the wild and majestic scenery that astonishes and exalts the beholder. This bridge was destroyed by the French in 1799, and the torrent was passed by Marshal Suwarof and the Russians, when he made his famous retreat.

Perhaps the reader will not be displeased to contemplate Suwarof's picture of this sublime scenery, in his dispatch to the emperor of Russia, dated Feldkirch, Oct. 3, O. S.

“ Our army left the frontiers of Italy, regretted by all the inhabitants, but with the glory of having liberated that country, and traversed a chain of dreadful mountains. Here St. Gothard, the colossus of mountains, surrounded by clouds impregnated with thunder, presents itself to our view; there the Vogelberg, striving as it were to eclipse the former in terrific grandeur! All dangers, all obstacles, are surmounted; and amidst the combat of elements, the enemy cannot withstand the brave army which suddenly appears on this new theatre; everywhere they are driven back. Your Imperial Majesty's troops penetrated the dark mountain cavern of Urseren,

Not far from this desolate landscape, the road led us into the *Urner-loch*, a subterraneous passage cut through a rock of granite \*, which opened at the opposite entrance into the serene and cultivated valley of Urseren: the objects that presented themselves were, a village backed by

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Urseren, and made themselves masters of the bridge which joins two mountains, and justly bears the name of Devil's bridge. Though the enemy destroyed it, the progress of the victorious troops was not impeded; boards were tied together with the officers' scarfs, and along that bridge they threw themselves from the highest precipices into tremendous abysses, fell in with the enemy, and defeated them wherever they could reach them. It now remained for our troops to climb Mount Winter, the summit of which is covered with everlasting snow, and whose naked rocks surpass every other in steepness. Almost buried in mud, they were obliged to ascend through cataracts rolling down with dreadful impetuosity, hurling with irresistible force huge fragments of rock, and masses of snow and clay, by which numbers of men and horses were impelled down the gaping caverns, where some found their graves, and others escaped with the greatest difficulty. It is beyond the powers of language to paint this awful spectacle of nature in all its horrors."

\* This passage was hollowed in 1707, by Peter Moretini, a native of Val-Maggia, at the expence of the inhabitants in the valley of Urseren. It is nine feet in breadth, ten in height, and two hundred and twenty in length.

a high

a high mountain, and a wood of pines; peasants at work in the fields, cattle feeding in the meadows, and the river, which was lately all foam and agitation, now flowed silently and smoothly; while the sun, which had been hidden from us in the deep abyss, shone in its full splendor. In general there is a regular gradation from extreme wildness to high cultivation; but here the transition was abrupt, and the change instantaneous: it was like the lifting up of a curtain, and had all the effect of enchantment.

In this valley are four villages, Urseren, Hopital, Realp, and Zundorf; forming a small republic under the protection of Uri. The territory of this little commonwealth is about nine miles in length and two in breadth, and contains thirteen hundred souls. The people elect, in their general assembly, their *Talamman* or chief, as also some other magistrates; and there is a permanent council of fifteen members, who assemble in each of the different districts. The inhabitants enjoy great privileges, but are not absolutely independent: for in civil causes an appeal lies from their courts of justice to Altdorf, and in criminal proceedings, two deputies from the government of Uri are present at the trial, and deliver to the judges of the valley the opinion of the council of Altdorf.

Notwith-



Notwithstanding the considerable elevation of this valley, and the coldness of the air even at this season of the year, it produces excellent pasture. The only wood therein is the small plantation of pines above the village of Urseren, which is preserved with uncommon care and reverence, and a small quantity of underwood and stubbed willows, that feather the banks of the Reufs. In the adjacent country there are several mines of crystal, of which a considerable quantity is exported. The language of the natives is a kind of provincial German, but almost every person speaks Italian.

The valley of Urseren is a small plain surrounded by high mountains, covered with pasture terminating in barren rocks, in many parts capped with snow. Near the middle of this beautiful plain we turned to the left, and entered the valley of St. Gothard, filled with the ruins of broken mountains; the Reufs, a most rapid and vehement torrent, bursting through it; on each side, immense shattered blocks of granite, of a beautiful greyish colour (and of which the summits of these alps are composed) confusedly piled together.

The valley of St. Gothard, though not so wild as that of Schoellenen, is yet exceedingly dreary. It does not contain a single shed, or  
produce

produce a single tree; and the sides of the mountains are barely sprinkled with short herbage. The extremity is closed by the still ruder and naked rocks of the Feudo, supporting in its hollows vast masses of snow, while the superb glacier of the Locendro towers above the adjacent heights. It is about two leagues from Urferen to this place; but the road, considering the ruggedness of the rocks and the steepness of the ascent, is not incommodious: it is from nine to twelve feet broad, and almost as well paved as the streets of London.

We are now lodged at a house inhabited by two Italian friars from the convent of Capuchins at Milan, who receive all strangers that pass through these inhospitable regions. One of the friars is absent, so that I am in possession of his bedchamber: it is a snug little room, where a man may sleep very well without being an anchorite, and which, after the fatigues of our journey, I enjoy with a satisfaction much too sensible to envy the luxury of a palace. Our host has just supplied us with a dinner, consisting of delicious trout, with which the neighbouring lake of Locendro abounds, eggs, and milk, together with excellent butter and cheese; both made in this dreary spot.

Upon our arrival we were rejoiced to find a good fire; the weather being so exceedingly



cold, that I, who was only clad in a thin camlet coat, entered the house half frozen. It is singular to find, at the distance of only a day's journey, such a difference in the climate: the air is absolutely in a freezing state; and I just now passed a boy at work, who was blowing his fingers to warm them. If the cold is so piercing in the midst of summer, how intolerable must it prove in December? The snow begins to fall the latter end of September; and the lakes about this spot are frozen during eight months in the year.

I am just returned from visiting the sources of the Tesino and the Reuss, which rise within a short distance of each other. The Tesino has three principal sources in the chain of the St. Gothard. The first is a spring near the foot of the Prosa, entirely covered with frozen snow, or, when that is melted, with fallen fragments of rock, through which it trickles in numerous currents, that unite and help to form a small lake: from this piece of water it communicates with two other lakes, and issues in a more considerable torrent.

The lake of La Sella, in another part of the eastern chain, supplies the second source; the third is furnished by the snows of Mount Feudo. These three sources uniting with another branch, that flows from the Furca through the valley of Bedreto,



Bedreto, form one great torrent, which takes its course towards the south, enters the lake of Locarno, and traversing part of the Milanese falls into the Po.

The source of the Reufs is the lake of Locendro, an oblong piece of water about three miles in circumference, stretching between the mountains of Petina and Locendro, and almost entirely supplied by the immense glaciers which crown the summit of the Locendro. The stream issuing from this lake rushes down the valley of St. Gothard, and joining in the vale of Urferen the two branches which come from the Furca on one side, and from the Grison mountains on the other, flows towards the north into the lake of Lucern, and from thence throws itself into the Aar.

Within a day's journey is the source of the Rhine in the Grisons, and about the distance of three leagues, that of the Rhone in the Furca, which mountain we shall pass to-morrow. We are still surrounded by high rugged rocks, and inaccessible glaciers; so that our view is much confined; though I walked above a league towards Italy, in hopes of enjoying an extensive prospect over that delightful country, yet I could observe nothing but rocks, precipices, and torrents.

I am at this instant near \* seven thousand feet perpendicular above the level of the sea: no inconsiderable height, most certainly. Nevertheless, if I gave credit to those who assert, that this mountain is the loftiest point in Europe, I should raise myself in idea above twice as high; but I have reason to think, that this opinion is founded upon false calculations. Mikeli, who measured the principal mountains of Switzerland, but who is very inaccurate in his calculations, considers the St. Gothard as the highest; and he estimates its elevation above the sea at 17,600 feet. But, so far from being of that height, it is by no means the highest ground of Switzerland; and there is probably not one mountain, either in Europe, Asia, or Africa, of that altitude. According to General Pfiffer, the summit of the St. Gothard rises above the sea 9,075 feet; an elevation considerably less than that of *Ætna* and *Teneriff*, and still more inferior to several mountains in the great chain of alps, to which we are bending our course.

\* According to M. de Saussure, the spot upon which the house of the Capuchin friars is built, is 1,061 French toises above the sea.

August 1785.

On my entrance into the little plain in which the friar's house is situated, although the air was exceedingly keen, I did not experience that piercing cold which I felt in 1776 ; but the day was fine, and the sun shone unclouded. When we arrived at the house, the friar was saying mass to an audience of about twenty persons, many of whom come from the neighbouring alps, where they are tending cattle, to divine service on Sundays and festivals. At the conclusion of mass, the friar, whose name is Francis, immediately recollected, and received me with great satisfaction. He is well known to all travellers that pass this way, having already inhabited this dreary spot above twenty years. Since my last expedition, he has considerably enlarged his house, and rendered it extremely commodious. It contains at present, besides several sitting-rooms, kitchens, and an apartment for the family, nine small but neat bedchambers appropriated to travellers. The expence of this addition has already amounted to £. 300, part of which he collected in various districts of Switzerland ; an equal sum is required to discharge the present debts, and to make the further necessary improvements, which he hopes to procure by another collection.



Friar Francis obligingly accompanied me about the environs, and favoured me with the following particulars, in addition to my former account. The chain of mountains, which immediately furrounds this place, takes the general appellation of St. Gothard; and its particular parts are called by different names; of which the principal are, the Salla, Profa, and Surecha, to the east; the Feudo, the Petina, and the Locendro, to the west; to the north, the Urfino; and to the south, the ridge of naked and piked rocks of the Val-Maggia. Of these the Feudo is the most elevated: its highest point rises more than 2000 feet above the plain in which stands the friar's house, and requires three hours to reach it. There are six pastures on the neighbouring heights, on which are fed two hundred cows, a hundred and fifty goats, and thirty horses.

On examining, at mid-day, Reaumur's thermometer, placed in the shade in a northern aspect, I was much surprised to find, that the mercury stood at  $6\frac{6}{10}$  above freezing point, or 46 of Fahrenheit, although the northern wind was exceedingly keen, and, if I had judged from my own feelings, I should have concluded that the air was in a freezing state.

About four years ago, the elector of Bavaria sent to the friar several barometers, thermometers,

ters, and other meteorological instruments, which enabled him to note the variations of the atmosphere, and to form a series of observations. In the most extreme cold he ever experienced in these parts, the mercury in Reaumur's thermometer fell to 19 degrees below freezing point, or  $-10$  of Fahrenheit.

In 1784. Greatest heat on the 13th of September, it stood at 13, or  $61\frac{1}{2}$  of Fahrenheit. Greatest cold at  $-17$ , or  $8\frac{1}{2}$  of Fahrenheit.

M. de Luc's barometer never rose

higher than — 22. 3. 1.

or fell lower than — 20. 9. 9.

It appeared from observations made in 1784, that the average state of the thermometer and barometer was as follows :

Thermometer.			Barometer.		
Nine in the morning, }	$27\frac{1}{2}$ of Reaumur, or 28 of Fahrenheit		21	9	2
Mid-day —	0	— or 32	—	21	9 3
Nine in the afternoon, }	1—3 lines, — or $29\frac{1}{2}$		—	21	9 4

In the same year it snowed during some part of 118 days; rained 78; cloudy 293; tempest, with hail, 12; thunder and lightning 22; rainbow 4. Halos round the sun 2, and round the moon 2. Serene days 87.

## LETTER 28.

*Passage and Glacier of the Furca—Source of the Rhone.*

Munster in the Vallais, Aug. 11, 1776.

I ARRIVED here late yesterday evening, and so fatigued that I was incapable of writing, but I am this morning refreshed with a comfortable sleep, and in spirits to continue my journal. I took leave of our host at St. Gotthard, and walked alone, for about two leagues, down the valley. I frequently quit my party, and either go on before, or loiter behind, that I may enjoy uninterrupted, and with a sort of melancholy pleasure, these sublime exhibitions of Nature in her most awful and tremendous forms. I entered the valley of Urseren at Hopital, and was again struck with the strong contrast between that cultivated vale and the desolate country I had just quitted. At the same time I enjoyed a most sublime view of the high chain that encloses the vale of Urseren, and particularly noticed the towering rocks, which stand in the country of the Grisons, one of them supporting on its rugged top a glacier, from



from which the Rhine takes its rise. We passed through the small village of Zundorf, and stopped at Realp, to procure some refreshment, and bait our horses. From thence we soon reached the extremity of the valley of Urseren; where we began ascending a path so narrow, steep, and rugged, that I suspected we had missed our way, as it seemed almost impracticable for horses: upon their arrival, however, I mounted, being fatigued with my walk from St. Gothard to Realp. It was a single path, up a steep mountain, where a horse, with some dexterity, could just put one leg before the other: this path sometimes lay upon the edge of a precipice, very craggy and stony; where, if my steed had happened to stumble, we must both inevitably have perished. But as I knew he was no more inclined than myself to roll down the precipice, I flung the bridle upon his mane, and entrusted myself to his direction. Nor had I any reason to repent of my confidence; for, in the bad and dangerous parts, he never once tripped; where it was smoother and safer, indeed, he knew he had a licence to be more careless.

We came at length to a torrent, through which we drove our horses with some difficulty, and crossed it by means of a plank; a little farther

farther we arrived at another, deeper and more violent, over which there was no bridge, nor the least appearance of any track on the other side; it was a considerable distance from any habitation, and our guide unacquainted with the road. After some observation we discovered that the mountain had lately fallen down, and overwhelmed the path, leaving only a very faint narrow track on the side of the precipice, along which my companions scrambled upon their hands and knees. While I was crossing the torrent on horseback, I heard a scream, and turning round, saw one of our servants seized with a panic on the very edge of the precipice, and vehemently exclaiming, that he could neither get backwards or forwards. Nevertheless, with some assistance, he passed over, declaring, at the same time, that he would take care never to put himself again in a similar situation. We now regained a kind of path, but so extremely steep, that we prudently dismounted, and suffered the horses to make their own way. With much difficulty, and after crossing several large drifts of ice and snow, the torrents at the same time rumbling under our feet, we reached, by a very steep ascent, the summit of the Furca. A number of rugged and forked rocks, piled one above another, have occasioned, it is said, this



this chain to be called the *Furca*. The country immediately around was as dreary and desolate as the valley of Schoellenen; all vegetation seemed to have ceased: lower down, the mountains were covered with herbage and sweet-scented flowers; near us, but higher, on the left, between the Blaueberg and the Lungnetz, lay a large body of ice, from which issued a torrent \*, probably one of the first sources of the Rhone. In a word, the majestic objects that presented themselves to our view, formed a most astonishing and sublime scene.

From hence we descended broken rocks and craggy precipices for a considerable way. By this time I was so much fatigued, that I was glad to sit down and take some refreshment, consisting of bread, cheese, and hard eggs; the only provision we could procure at Realp. We were seated by a stream of clear water rippling down the side of a mountain, so exceedingly steep, that our humble repast would have rolled

\* I was informed by a friar of Realp, who travels much in these parts, that this torrent, which is turbid in summer, is, in winter, as transparent as the clearest spring; and that when the accumulation of the snow prevents it from flowing under the glacier of the Furca, it then forms a lake, runs over the ice, and rushes to the Vallais with the waters it receives in its course.

away,



away, if it had not been supported. In full view before us was the glacier of the Furca; an immense valley of ice, extending at least three miles in length, and near a mile in breadth between the Gletcherberg and the Satzberg, rocks more shagged, if possible, than any of the neighbouring mountains: it stretches from their feet, fills up the intervening chasm, and reaches almost to their summits. The rays of the sun caused it to glisten like chrystal; while the blue tints, reflected on the surface, appeared inexpressibly beautiful. The ice seemed to break in several parts, as we heard some loud and deep cracks; the torrent of the Rhone at the same time roaring beneath. That river is chiefly formed by this glacier: the small torrent, which bursts from the body of ice between the Blaueberg and the Lungnetz, being joined by several streams, loses itself under the vast arch of ice that forms the bottom of the glacier, issues considerably augmented, and is the great and principal source from whence the Rhone takes its rise. The range of mountains on which we were sitting, was overspread with underwood and herbage, and some cattle were feeding along the heights: a fine contrast to the sterility of the opposite chain, which appeared, for some extent, nothing but bare rock,

rock, except where it was covered with ice and frozen snow.

Having finished our banquet, and reposed ourselves for a short time, in contemplation of the scene, we descended to the bottom of the glacier, where we admired the Rhone breaking forth with violence from the bed of ice, near the huge fragments of a fallen rock. We now followed the course of that river, and proceeded down a mountain so steep, that several parts of the road winding along its sides, were frequently parallel to each other. The scenery of the valley, which we now entered, was of the same nature as that of Schoellenen; the Rhone foaming with amazing rapidity, and falling in a continual cataract at the foot of irregular and immeasurable alps. We travelled through this valley above two leagues, perpetually ascending or descending the rugged sides of rocks; one moment close to the river, and the next some hundred yards above it. At first the rocks were either bare, or studded with a few straggling pines; but as we advanced, became more and more clothed with wood and verdure: still, however, we observed no traces of any habitation, and we had now measured at least fifteen miles from the valley of Urseren, without seeing a single dwelling. I was here so  
struck

struck with the beauty of the forests, and the luxuriance of the pasture, that I could not avoid expressing my astonishment on observing no appearance of any habitation in these delightful spots. I had scarcely made the remark, when four or five cottages, situated on the other side of the Rhone, upon a beautiful declivity, announced our approach to the Vallais. Not long afterwards, we unexpectedly came to an opening which commanded an extensive view of that fertile vale, containing several scattered villages. In this very spot a peasant of taste has built his cottage. Here we quitted the rugged track, and descended into the Vallais.

We had proposed passing the night at Oberwald, after the fatigues of the day, but, upon inquiry, found no refreshment. The master of a little hovel, which was called an inn, pointed to a large cheese, and told us that was all his provision; it was his bread, his fish, and his meat. As there was no better accommodation at Obergestlen, we continued our route to Munster, where we did not arrive till late; here we found an excellent inn for this country, which afforded good bread, and even some meat; but what was far more comfortable to me, a quiet room and a clean bed.

I am, &c.



## LETTER 29.

*Mount Grimfel — Source of the Aar — Of the  
Chamois.*

Spital upon the Grimfel, August 11.

THE Vallaisans are remarkably attached to their liberty. On quitting Munster this morning, we joined company with a peasant, with whom we had a long conversation. He demanded our opinion of the country; and, pointing to the mountains, exclaimed, “Behold our walls and bulwarks; Constantinople is not so strongly fortified.” This upper part of the Vallais, I should imagine, is not much frequented by travellers, if we may judge from the curiosity of the people, who all came out to gaze upon us; and, on discovering that we were Englishmen, they observed us with greater attention. But what surprised us was, that the peasant above-mentioned inquired concerning the state of our war with the Americans.

After

After returning about a league through the same fertile and well-cultivated country which we traversed yesterday, we left the plain, and ascended the Grimsel; one of those alps which separate the Vallais from the canton of Bern. We employed four hours in climbing a steep and craggy road to the summit, and should have considered the attempt as scarcely practicable, had we not been encouraged by the experience of yesterday. We crossed the several shades of vegetation: in the valley, and the lower parts of the mountain, corn and rich meadows; then forests of larch and pine; next, short grass, together with several species of herbs, that afford exquisite pasture to the cattle; to these succeeded the various tribes of mosses and lichens; then bare rock and snow. It would be curious to construct, or at least to imagine, a scale of vegetation, according to the idea of a French writer; who asserts, that excessive cold and excessive heat are equally pernicious. The tops of these mountains are barren, and produce no plants; and at certain heights nothing but mosses and lichens will vegetate: the same occurs in climates where the heat is intolerable; as no other vegetable productions are observed in the burning  
ing

ing sands of Africa. The lichens and mosses then, which support the cold better than other plants, would form the first degree of a scale adjusted to determine, how far vegetation accords with the temperature of the atmosphere. The same families of plants, as they bear also the heat much better than any other, would occupy the last degree in the scale. Thus, according to this fanciful scale, the two extremes touch each other surprisingly.

From the top of the Grimsel we descended about two miles, and arrived at a small plain or hollow in the midst of the mountains; containing one solitary hovel, from which I am now writing to you. Notwithstanding its wretched appearance, we found in this desert spot all the accommodations we could wish for, except beds, and these are the less necessary, after our sound sleep last night. Not to mention excellent cheese, butter, and milk (our ordinary fare) we obtained some good wine, a small portion of kid, and a boiled *marmot*\*, which we have just devoured; although at another time we should have revolted at the very idea. The landlord is stationed in

\* See an account of the Marmot in Vol. iii.



this forlorn region by the canton of Bern, and resides in it about nine months; he usually arrives here on the first of March, and retires in the beginning of December. When he quits the place, he leaves a certain quantity of cheese, hard bread, salted provision, and fuel, in case any unfortunate wanderer should happen to come this way in winter; and we observed long poles fixed on both sides of the track, at small distances from each other, in order to point out the path to travellers, who may chance to pass this mountain after the snow has begun to fall. The road is seldom open for horses before the first of June. Near the house, upon the top of a small rock, our host has contrived a kind of little garden, by bringing some earth from the neighbouring pastures: this small piece of ground supplies him tolerably well with turnips and cabbages; although, on account of the height of the circumjacent mountains, it does not long enjoy the warmth of the sun.

Numerous herds of goats are kept, during the summer months, upon these mountains: they are let out every morning to feed, and return every evening before sun-set to be milked and housed. It was a pleasing sight to observe them

them marching homeward in the same herd, and following each other down the broken precipices, and along the rugged sides of the rocks.

This hovel, beside the storehouses for cheese, contains only a small kitchen, a bed-chamber appropriated to the family, and a room, in which we are now sitting. We occupy nearly one side: the other is taken up by our servants, the landlord and his wife, and half a dozen honest labourers: the latter are partaking of their homely supper, with all the relish of well-earned hunger, and are enjoying a short respite from their toil, with that noisy mirth which characterises this class of people.

The sources of the Aar are in these mountains. Near our hovel are three lakes that supply that river, which rolls down in an impetuous torrent from the neighbouring glaciers. While dinner was preparing, we walked by the side of the Aar, searching for crystals, which are very common in these parts: we found pieces of divers colours, white, black, yellow, and green. These mountains certainly abound also in rich veins of gold, and other metals; a considerable quantity of gold-dust being found

in the bed of the Aar \*, and in the various torrents. I can conceive nothing more fatal to the interests of Switzerland, none more repugnant to the liberties of the people, than to have these mines of gold or silver traced and opened. A sudden overflow of riches would effectually change and corrupt their manners: it is an incontestible truth, that the real power of a country, not ambitious of conquest, is derived less from the wealth than from the industry of its subjects; the happiness of a people, as well as of an individual, consisting in contentment.

What a chaos of mountains are here heaped upon one another! a dreary, desolate, but sublime appearance: it looks like the ruins and wreck of a world.

On the Grimsel, Aug. 29, 1786.

You will recollect that, in 1776 †, I described the passage of the Furca as extremely difficult, and attended with some danger. But that was my first essay over the less frequented alps. How different are our sensations at different intervals! To-day, on measuring the same ground, though

\* It has been suggested to me, that no gold-dust is found in the Aar, until it has received the Reichen-bach.

† See the preceding Letter.



I did not find the road as *smooth as a bowling-green*, I yet never once dismounted, but rode with my Letters on Switzerland in my hand, occasionally making notes and observations: it must, however, be confessed, that in many parts, where a faint path along the crags and impending precipices was scarcely obvious, my situation was not very favourable for accurate composition.

From the top of the Furca, instead of immediately descending and pursuing the same road which I followed in 1776, we sent our horses forwards, and ascended the Galleberg to the upper part of the glacier of the Furca: from thence we looked down upon the Vallais and the Rhone flowing through it, as upon a small field watered by a rill; above and around, and as far as the eye could reach, we observed numberless pointed alps, and particularly that stupendous chain called the *Aar-Gletchers*, which comprises, among many others, the Finster-aar-horn, the Wetter-horn, the Jung-frau-horn, and the Schreck-horn.

The upper part of this glacier of the Furca is far more beautiful than the lower extremity; the snow is of a more virgin white; the pyramids of ice more bold, and the blue tints more lively and animated. Having enjoyed, in different

directions, this icy scene, we descended near the edge of the glacier, and refreshed ourselves with some water from two transparent springs called *Aughstweicht-brunnen*, that burst from the sides of the rock, at a small distance from each other. We then went down a very steep descent, till we joined the track which I pursued in 1776. I recollected, with a pleasing satisfaction, the torrent, near which we took on that occasion our humble repast, and came to the Rhone about half a mile below the spot where it bursts in two streams from the bottom of the glacier. In order to have a nearer view, we crossed the two streams, which, though scarcely three feet in depth, rushed with such violence, as almost to overturn the guide, who conveyed me on his shoulders. Having admired the arch of ice, and paid our obeisance to the majestic habitation of the River-God, we walked at the foot of the Satzberg, and noticed several lively springs issuing from the ground, which the inhabitants call *cold waters*, and a little further three warm sources \*. These sources, uniting  
with

\* I am indebted to Saussure for correcting a trifling error in a former edition of this work, in which I observed that the mercury in Reaumur's thermometer stood at 10 above freezing point, or 55 of Fahrenheit:

but

with several cold springs, fall, within a few paces of their rise, into the great torrent that flows

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but that ingenious naturalist, on plunging the thermometer into one of these sources, found the mercury stand at  $14\frac{1}{2}$  or 64. 7. of Fahrenheit.

The experiments which Saussure made in analysing the waters, shall be inserted in his own words :

“ La hauteur de cette source est, d’après mes observations du barometre, de 900 toises au-dessus de la Méditerranée. Or, il est si extraordinaire de trouver une source chaude à une telle élévation, et de la trouver au milieu des glaces, qu’il étoit intéressant de rechercher sa nature, et de voir si cette recherche ne donneroit point d’indication sur la cause de sa chaleur.

“ Dans ce dessein, j’y portai, en 1783, quelques réactifs, avec de petits verres, que je lavai dans l’eau même de la source, et j’en fis l’épreuve sur les lieux. La solution de soude ne la trouble en aucune maniere, non plus que l’acide du sucre, phénomène bien rare, et qui prouve que ces eaux ne contiennent aucun sel à base terreuse. Mais la solution de terre pesante dans l’acide marin, ou le muriate de baryte, la trouble un peu ; ce qui indique la présence de l’acide vitriolique ; et comme d’un autre côté, cette eau ne change nullement les couleurs végétales, et qu’ainsi l’acide ne paroïssoit point être libre, il est vraisemblable qu’il y est combiné avec un alkali, et qu’ainsi c’est du sel de glauber ou de sulfate de soude que ces eaux contiennent. Enfin la dissolution d’argent dans l’acide nitreux, la trouble sur le champ, et après une demi heure de repos, la liqueur se sépare en



flows from the glacier, and are usually considered as the *true* sources of the Rhone. That honour is appropriated to these little rills, because, being of an equal temperature in all seasons of the year, they do not owe their origin, like the *cold waters*, to the melted snow and ice, and are as abundant in winter as in summer. It appears, however, extremely inconsistent to dignify these little streams with the *exclusive* title of the sources of the Rhone; for that river undoubtedly owes its origin and greatness

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deux parties; celle de dessus, qui forme les  $\frac{2}{3}$  du verre, est grise et opaque, tandis que celle du fond paroît d'un rouge transparent. Il suit de là que ces eaux contiennent du soufre, mais plutôt sous la forme de vapeur, que dissous par un alkali ou par une terre, puisque l'acide nitreux libre n'y occasionne ni précipité, ni changement de couleur.

“ En la savourant avec attention, j'y reconnus un gout légèrement sulfureux, et mon domestique, qui n'étoit point prévenu, le reconnut également. Il est donc vraisemblable, que cette eau, vraiment thermale, doit, comme les autres, sa chaleur à quelque amas de pyrites qui se réchauffent en se décomposant lentement dans le sein des montagnes. Les tremblements de terre, si fréquents dans le canton d'Uri, sur les frontières duquel ces sources sont situées, rendent plus probable encore l'existence de ce foyer.”

*Saussure, Voyages dans les Alpes, tom. iii. p. 483, 484.*

to the perpetual and inexhaustible supplies from the surrounding glaciers.

We had now employed above nine hours in this expedition, and should have continued much longer amid these majestic scenes, had not the declining sun reminded us of approaching night. Being still at a considerable distance from any habitation, we continued our route, and began ascending the Grimsel, near the warm sources. The track, though extremely steep, and almost perpendicular, was not dangerous, because the rocks were thickly covered with small shrubs, herbage, and mosses.

After an hour and a quarter's tedious ascent, we attained the summit of the Grimsel, and descending a rugged ridge of granite rocks, looked down upon a lake, from which issues a stream that falls into the Rhone. A little further we passed several small rills and dark lakes which supply the Aar; in less than an hour entered the road which leads to the Valais, and reached the place of our destination, the same hovel on the Grimsel, where I passed the night on my former expedition. We arrived there about eight in the evening, after a journey which employed us more than twelve hours. I was much struck with the view of the lake near the Inn: it is of a dark appearance,

ance, and its name is as melancholy as its aspect: it is called the “*Lake of the Dead*,” because the dead bodies of those who perish in traversing these unhospitable regions, are usually thrown into it\*.

No situation can exceed the solitary horror of the scenery on the top of the Grimfel. Its appearance resembled the inside of a mine, and seemed as if the bowels of the earth had been violently rent asunder; reminding me of that sublime description in the *Æneis*, when the inside of Cacus’s cave is instantaneously laid open by the arm of Hercules:

*At specus, et Caci detecta apparuit ingens  
Regia, et umbrosæ penitus patuere cavernæ.  
Non secus ac si quâ penitus vi terra dehiscens  
Infernas referet sedes, et regna recludat  
Pallida, Diis invisa; superq; immane barathrum  
Cernatur, trepidentque inmisso lumine manes†.*

On

\* Sauffure, vol. iv. p. 462.

† Dryden’s *Virgil*, Book viii.

The court of Cacus stands reveal’d to sight;  
The cavern glares with new-admitted light,  
So pent, the vapours with a rumbling sound  
Heave from below, and rend the hollow ground.

A sounding



On entering the hovel I immediately recognized the same landlord, who was stationed here in 1776, to whom, at that time, I never expected to owe a second reception in so forlorn a spot. While supper was preparing, a peasant and our guide, forgetful of his great fatigue, suddenly started up at the sound of their favourite air, the *Renz des vaches*, played upon a rebec by a shepherd, and danced several *allemandes*, perfectly in time, and not without grace; a picturesque group of spectators looking on and applauding.

August 30.

THIS morning we made a short excursion to the source of the Aar, which takes its rise in neighbouring glaciers. In less than half an hour we entered a small plain, skirted by high mountains, and entirely closed by a rugged chain of alps, over which tower the Finster-Aar and Lauter-Aar-horns, and at whose feet stretches a gla-

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A sounding flaw succeeds ; and from on high  
The gods with hate behold the nether-sky ;  
The ghosts repine at violated night,  
And curse the invading sun, and sicken at the sight.

cier

cier so entirely covered with earth and stones, as to bear, at a small distance, the appearance of a sand-hill. From this glacier issues a “*torrent roaring loud*” of troubled waters, which is the source of the Lower Aar, and joins, in a few hundred paces, another stream called the Upper Aar, that falls from the Zinkeberg: the union of these torrents forms the Aar, which rushes with great impetuosity over enormous fragments of rock. At present it runs in a narrow channel; but at the first melting of the snow in spring, overflows the whole space between the mountains, and becomes a temporary lake.

Our guide is a *chasseur*, who frequently ranges over this vast chain of alps, in pursuit of the chamois, an animal remarkable for its activity in scouring the craggy rocks, and leaping over the precipices. He informed me, that this glacier is the extremity of a valley of ice about twelve miles in length, and from one to four in breadth: it then divides into two branches; one extends towards the Schreckhorn, and the other towards the Vallais. He expatiated with great enthusiasm on the profession of a *chasseur*, though extremely laborious, and at times dangerous. He usually kills from six to fifteen chamois

chamois in a year: with the flesh, which is very delicate, he helps to support his family, and disposes of each skin for a guinea. He uses a rifle-barrelled gun, and generally shoots them at the distance of three or four hundred yards.

The chamois are very timorous, and consequently watchful animals. They usually go out in herds of twenty or thirty; while they are feeding, one of them posted on an adjacent height stands *centinel*, and is relieved, at short intervals, by another. The *centinel* looks around with great solicitude, and on the least suspicion of danger alarms the herd by a shrill cry; instantly the whole troop decamp, one following the other.

The chamois feed on various kinds of herbage, and particularly on the *Lichen Rangiferinus*, or rein-deer lichen, which is found in such great quantities, as in many parts to cover the summits and sides of the mountains. In order to procure their favourite food in winter, they, like the rein-deer, clear away the snow with their fore-feet, frequently thawing it with their breath, for the purpose of loosening it more easily. But when, either from the depth or hardness of the snow, they cannot penetrate to the lichens, they browse on the saplings of pine  
and



and fir. In summer their bodies are of a yellowish brown, and whitish under the throat; the hair is short and smooth; in winter their coat lengthens and grows dark, so as to resemble that of a bear. Sometimes, but very rarely, they have been found speckled, or of variegated colours, and, lately, a chamois, entirely white, was shot upon the Engelberg. It was in all other respects similar to a common chamois, and it is uncertain whether it owed its colour to age or accident.

Linnaeus has classed the chamois in the goat genus, under the name of *rupicapra*, or mountain-goat; his acquaintance with the antelopes having been too slender to enable him to form a genus of antelopes, which Pallas first constructed, and where he has judiciously placed this animal. The example of Pallas has been followed by Pennant and succeeding zoologists.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 30.

*Valley of the Aar—Land of Hasli—Meyringen.*

August, 1776.

**I** FOUND the cold upon the Grimsel more piercing than upon the St. Gothard, and last night it even deprived me of sleep. But then circumstances were very different in the two lodgings; for on the St. Gothard I had a comfortable bed, whereas last night I lay in the hay-loft, without any covering: I declare, my blood has scarcely recovered its circulation. Take notice, this is the twelfth of August.

Having quitted our wretched abode on the Grimsel, we passed along the valley of the Aar, through a chain of wild, rugged, and uninhabitable alps.

The road along this valley, though much narrower than that from Altdorf to the St. Gothard, is formed in the same manner along the steep acclivities and declivities, sometimes laid on arches, and sometimes carried over bridges thrown across tremendous precipices. It is paved with flat pieces of granite, so smooth and slippery, that the horses would have perpetually stumbled,

stumbled, had they not been rough-shod. In some places this road ran along the bare and rugged ridges; in others, down steps, either cut in the rock, or formed by large stones, so that for several paces it resembled a staircase. The whole surface of the valley was thickly strewn with vast fragments of rock; while those, which still hung on the sides of the mountains, seemed threatening to overwhelm us; the river, during the whole way, thundering along in a continual fall. This valley exhibits the same kind of scenes to which we have been long accustomed; except that the Aar rushes with more impetuous rage even than the Rhone or the Reuss, and is frequently so swelled with torrents as to ravage all the adjacent country: we saw many traces of these terrible devastations. We crossed it in several places, over stone bridges of a single arch, one of which equalled, in the length of its span and dreariness of the landscape, the Devil's Bridge in the valley of Schoellenen. About three leagues from Spital, we had a glimpse, through the trees, of the Aar falling from a considerable height. In order to gain a nearer view, we climbed along the sides of a steep rock, well covered with moss: I leaned against a tree that impended over the precipice, and saw the river



rushing from the rock, and spreading into a kind of semicircular expansion in its descent. It fell with fury into a deep and narrow gulf, and then lost itself in the midst of the forest. The body of water was very considerable, and its perpendicular fall at least one hundred and fifty feet. The scenery also was solemnly majestic; the grey rocks on each side rising perpendicularly, and totally bare, except their tops, which were fringed with pines.

This picturesque scene appeared to realize a favourite image of classic antiquity: as I viewed the Aar pouring its flood of waters from a crevice of the rock, I figured to myself the Nile or the Tiber bursting at once from the urn of a River God.

In our way to Meyringen, we traversed large forests of beech and pines, the Aar roaring along the valley, and the road, which was usually craggy and rugged, incessantly ascending and descending. We now passed through several small villages, which afforded a pleasing sight, after the desolate country we had lately quitted, and entered a beautiful little valley of a most lively verdure, and delightfully planted. All was calmness and repose: neither rapid river nor roaring torrent to interrupt the unusual stillness and tranquillity of the scene. This short

interval of silence rendered us more sensibly affected with the turbulence of the Aar, and the loud clamour of the cataracts.

From this silent and sequestered spot, we descended to a larger valley on the banks of the Aar. Perhaps no other part of Switzerland would yield more delight and occupation to the landscape-painter than this picturesque valley, from the agreeable and ever-changing colour of the rocks which bound it, their summits finely broken into irregular and fantastic forms, and from the variety and size of the fragments dispersed near the banks of the river. Each fragment, each cottage, each shed, each shrub, is a picture; the effect being considerably heightened by the transparency of the air, and the grandeur of the back-ground.

I have now visited the sources of three great rivers in Switzerland, and traced their impetuous progress through a tract of country, in which nature has exhibited the grandest and most august of her works. But it is impossible adequately to describe these majestic and astonishing scenes! In description they must all appear nearly the same; yet, in fact, every river, cataract, rock, mountain, precipice, are respectively distinguished by an infinite diversity of modifications, and by all



all the possible forms of beauty, magnificence, sublimity, or horror. But these discriminating variations, though too visibly marked to escape even the least observing eye, elude representation, and defy the strongest powers of the pen and pencil. In a word, you must not judge of this romantic country, from the faint sketches I have attempted to delineate; they can no more convey an idea of these wonderful scenes, than if I were to aim at describing the pictures of Claude and Salvator, by informing you, that they are composed of paint and canvass.

Meyringen, a large and neat village, is the capital burgh of Hasliland, a district in the canton of Bern, which enjoys considerable privileges. The people are governed by their own magistrates, and only take oaths of fidelity to the Sovereign Council. All the authority, which the bailifs in the other parts of this canton enjoy, is possessed in a great measure by the Landamman, who resides at Meyringen. He is always a native of Hasliland, and is appointed by the Sovereign Council of Bern, at the recommendation of the bailif of Interlaken. Most of the other magistrates are elected by the people, who assemble as occasion requires, and are convoked by the Landamman.



The inhabitants are a fine race of people: the men in general remarkably strong and well made; the women tall and handsome. The women have an elegant manner of wearing their hair, which is commonly of a beautiful brown: it is parted on the top of the forehead, from thence brought round and joined to the locks behind, which either hang down their back in long tresses, are braided with ribband, or woven round the head in a simple plait.

Meyringen is situated near the Aar, in a romantic vale, surrounded by meadows of a most luxuriant verdure, and sprinkled with cottages, which are occasionally separated by huge intervening stones and deep channels, the vestiges of storms and floods. Close to the village, the torrent Alp-bach falls from mount Houfli, in two perpendicular cascades, but with so much violence, and in so large a body of water, as to cause frequent inundations: indeed the burgh itself has been in danger of destruction by its repeated ravages; against which, however, it is now protected, by a wall of considerable height and solidity. Near this torrent another fall of water, the Dorf-bach, glides gently down the bare rock; further on, the Millebach glis-

tened as it descended through a hanging grove of pines, that feather the sides of the mountain.

As I stood on a platform of rock, about fifty feet above the bottom of the Alpbach, I looked over the delightful vale of Hasli, observed Mount Sheidec rising from the banks of the Aar, and sinking in one part, as if on purpose to discover three tremendous peaks towering in regular gradation; the one a naked conical rock; the second tapering and sprinkled with snow; and the third, which is the highest point of the Wetterhorn, of a pyramidal form, mantled with glistening ice.

The following is the ordinary price of provisions throughout the mountainous parts of Switzerland.

					<i>s. d.</i>
Butcher's meat, <i>per</i> pound	—	—	—	—	○ 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bread	—	D°	—	—	○ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Butter	—	D°	—	—	○ 2 $\frac{1}{4}$
Cheese	—	D°	—	—	○ 2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Salt	—	D°	—	—	○ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Milk, <i>per</i> quart	—	—	—	—	○ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Worst wine, <i>per</i> D°	—	—	—	—	○ 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pays de Vaud wine	—	—	—	—	○ 6*

\* The reader will recollect, that this list was taken in 1776, since which time the price of provisions is considerably augmented.

By this list you will perceive, that bread is much dearer in proportion, than the other articles, and the reason is obvious; for these mountainous parts abound in pasture, but produce little corn. The peasants, inhabiting the mountainous districts of Switzerland, live chiefly upon milk and potatoes. I had to-day a long conversation with one of our guides; he lives upon the mountains of Uri; and, as the winter lasts near eight months, each family lays in sufficient provision for the whole time. His own family consists of seven persons, and is provided with the following stores: seven cheeses, each weighing twenty-five pounds; a hundred and eight pounds of hard bread, twenty-five baskets of potatoes, each weighing about forty pounds; seven goats, and three cows, one of which is killed. The cows and horses are fed with hay, and the goats with the boughs of fir, which, in a scarcity of fodder, are given also to the other cattle. During this dreary season, the family are employed in making linen and cloth: for this purpose, a small part of the ground belonging to each cottage, is generally sown with flax, which has lately been much cultivated, and with increasing success, in the mountainous districts.



The houses, like those of Appenzel and Glarus, are generally of wood ; and it was a natural observation of one of our servants, in passing through a continued chain of rocks, that, as there was no deficiency of stone, it seemed extraordinary to employ wood alone for the purposes of building. But it may be remarked, that these wooden houses are sooner constructed, and easily repaired ; and being formed in a compact manner, with small rooms, and low ceilings, are sufficiently warm even for so cold a climate. The chief objection arises from the danger of fire ; which, however, is in some measure obviated by the method of building their cottages detached from each other. But this observation does not hold with respect to some of their largest burghs, which are exposed to the ravages of this dreadful calamity.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 31.

*Fall of the Reichenbach—Passage of the Sheidec—  
Valley and Glaciers of Grindelwald.*

Grindelwald, August 13.

**W**E left Meyringen this morning, crossed the Aar, and ascended the Sheidec through a beautiful forest of beech, poplars, mountain-ash, and pines. About two miles from Meyringen we dismounted at a small village, and passed along some fields, in order to view the fall of the Reichenbach, which is deservedly celebrated for its variety and beauty: it has its source at the foot of the Wetterhorn, and rolls in numerous cataracts down the steep sides of Mount Sheidec, until it joins the Aar near Meyringen.

The fall may be divided into three principal parts.

The first, which alone is usually visited by travellers, precipitates itself from an overhanging rock, is reduced into spray and foam, and in that state falls in a perpendicular column, from an elevation of at least two hundred feet, into a  
natural

natural basin, and is soon lost in the abyss beneath. The rock itself is concave, arched, totally bare, excepting its summit, which is feathered with shrubs, and, being of black marble, forms a striking contrast with the pure whiteness of the descending foam. Part of the spray rebounds on the rock, and glides gently into the basin in many a silvery current.

The second cataract begins from the overflowing of the basin, and is most advantageously seen from a large tree hanging on the side of the precipice; the torrent forms a second perpendicular column, which is half obscured, as it dashes through a chasm of projecting rocks. The best point of view for seeing the third cataract is in a meadow at the bottom of the second. From that situation the whole Reichenbach seems one immense water-fall; the bottom of the first, and the top of the second cataract, being concealed by the intervening hills. From thence it rolls nearly in a horizontal direction; is divided into two streams by a rocky island beautifully sprinkled with trees, and impetuously descends in two unequal bodies. It then dashes over broken crags of black marble, through groves of beech, mountain-ash, and pines, and rich grounds interspersed with hamlets.

On



On viewing the various parts of this stupendous fall, I was as much interested and affected, as Aristæus is represented by Virgil, when his mother Cyrene points out to him the sources of the principal rivers bursting at once from the earth.

*Jamque domum mirans genitricis et humida regna,  
Speluncisque lacus clausos, lucosque sonantes,  
Ibat, et ingenti motu stupefactus aquarum.  
Omnia sub magnâ labentia flumina terrâ  
Spectabat diversa locis, Phasimque, Lycumque,  
Et caput, unde altus primum se erumpit Enipeus,  
Unde pater Tiberinus, et unde Aniena fluens,  
Saxosumque sonans Hypanis, Mysusque Caicus,  
Et gemina auratus taurino cornua vultu  
Eridanus, quo non alius per pingua culta  
In mare purpureum violentior influit amnis \*.*

- 
- \* With wond'ring eyes he views the secret store  
Of lakes, that pent in hollow caverns roar ;  
He hears the crackling sound of coral woods,  
And sees the secret source of subterraneous floods ;  
And where, distinguished in their sev'ral cells,  
The fount of Phasis and of Lycus dwells ;  
Where swift Enipeus in his bed appears,  
And Tiber his majestic forehead rears ;  
Where Anio flows, and Hypanis profound  
Breaks thro' th' opposing rocks with raging sound ;  
Where Po first issues from his dark abodes,  
And, awful in his cradle, rules the floods.

*Dryden's Virgil, Georg. book iv.*

From

From hence ascending by the side of the Reichenbach, we crossed that torrent over a bridge, and, having traversed several plains, or rather undulating vallies, beautifully sprinkled with ash, poplar, and other large trees, continued our route at the foot of some enormous mountains, which are called by the general name of Wetterhorn\*, or *Stormy Peak*. This enormous group, which forms the Wetterhorn, is peculiarly striking, from the naked majesty and grandeur of its rugged peaks, and from its insulated situation, and because, in passing from

\* The several peaks of this mountain have different appellations, and are not ascertained without much difficulty, the peasants usually mistaking and confounding them. One is called the Wetter-horn, another the Nager horn, a third the Engel-horn, and the highest point takes the denomination of Jungfrau-horn, or Virgin-horn, for the same reason as the mountain of that name in the valley of Lauterbruennen, because its summit is inaccessible. Hence several travellers have mistaken this peak for the real Jungfrau-horn. I have mentioned these circumstances, in order to prevent the confusion of names puzzling future travellers as they once puzzled me. The word *horn* in German, which bears the same signification as in the English tongue, is applied to the highest peaks, as in French *aiguille*, or needle.

Meyringen

Meyringen to Grindelwald, it presents itself the first of this stupendous chain \*.

Having ascended about three hours from the time of our quitting Meyringen, we refreshed ourselves and our horses in a delightful vale strewn with hamlets; a sloping hill, adorned with variegated verdure and wood, on one side; on the other, the Rosenlavi and Schwartz-wald glaciers stretching between impending rocks; and before us the highest point of the Wetterhorn lifting its pyramidal top capped with eternal snow. As we were taking our repast, we were suddenly startled by a noise, like the sound of thunder; occasioned by a large body of snow falling from the top of the mountain, which, in its precipitate descent, had the appearance of a torrent of water reduced almost into spray. These *avalanches* (as they are called) are sometimes attended with the most fatal consequences; for when they consist of enormous masses, they destroy every thing in their course;

\* To those who go from Grindelwald to Meyringen, the Wetterhorn is the last of this chain. Hence the traveller will not perhaps be so much affected with its majesty and grandeur, as if he first observed it in ascending from Meyringen. I mention this circumstance, because all descriptions are *comparative*.

and



and not unfrequently overwhelm even a whole village. The best preservative against their effects being the forests, with which the alps abound, there is scarcely a village, if situated at the foot of a mountain, that is not sheltered by trees; which the inhabitants preserve with uncommon reverence. Thus, what constitutes one of the principal beauties in the country, affords also security to the people.

We continued our course at the foot of the Wetterhorn, which in this part is so extremely perpendicular and tapering as to appear like half of an immense pyramid. Here we conceived it impossible, that any scenes could be more rude and majestic than those before us; but on reaching the top of the Scheidec, we burst upon a view so far exceeding them in wildness and horror, that we unanimously exclaimed, “There is the *Schreckhorn*, or the *Peak of Terror*.” The descent from hence to Grindelwald is gentle but tedious. That village, consisting of numerous cottages, dispersed over the plain and upon the rising hills, exhibits an agreeable and picturesque scene, heightened at the same time by a view of the vallies of ice, which stretch along the steep sides of the mountains in a regular curve, and are beautifully skirted with wood.

The

The two vallies of ice, which extend into the plain of Grindelwald, are called the Superior and Inferior Glaciers. The former lies between the Wetterhorn and the Mettenberg; the latter between the Mettenberg and the Eger-horn. The Mettenberg is the base of the Schreckhorn; and the Eger-horn, or *Pointed Peak*, borders on the valley of Grindelwald, and slopes gradually from barren rock and snow to fertility and cultivation \*.

August the 14th.

DARE I confess to you, that I am somewhat disappointed, and that a nearer view of the glacier has not sufficiently compensated for the fatigue and trouble of the expedition? But I have promised to write from my own feelings, and not to send an account taken from exaggerated descriptions.

We sallied forth this morning full of impatience; and arrived at the bottom of the Inferior glacier, forming a majestic arch of ice; from which issued a loud torrent of snow-

\* For a further account of this chain of alps, which are contiguous to the vallies of Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen, see Letter on the Chain of Alps observed from Bern.

water.

water. This glacier is composed of numerous pyramids, which are more elevated towards the plain; being from about forty to fifty feet high, and gradually shortening, until they terminate in a broad surface broken into deep and wide chasms. We mounted a very difficult path at the edge of the frozen region, occasionally passing over the steep and craggy parts of rock almost perpendicular, along the very sides of the precipice, the danger of which makes me shudder even now. This glacier is several miles in length, and is supposed by many travellers to join the glacier of the Aar, which I visited in my expedition to the top of the Grimsel. But the reverend Mr. Wytttenbach of Bern, who has frequently examined its direction from the adjacent heights, assured me, that those two glaciers are separated from each other by a chain of mountains.

After employing above two hours in ascending, we were prevented from continuing our progress by rugged rocks, and a rising hill of ice; our guide assuring us at the same time, that it was impossible to proceed. Of this we were by no means convinced; but not having any conductor who could lead the way, and not daring to explore these unknown regions alone, we descended with heavy hearts,  
much



much disappointed, that what we had seen, though certainly a very curious and sublime sight, did not equal our expectations: it added to our chagrin, on being afterwards informed, that though we could scarcely have proceeded further in the direction which we took, yet, that if we had followed another path, we might have penetrated to the Superior glacier, and reached the base of the Schreckhorn. In that part between the mountains, now occupied by the Inferior glacier, there was formerly a road which communicated with the Vallais, but at present impassable; and a spot was pointed out to us, now covered with ice, where once stood a small chapel.

Not far from this glacier of Grindelwald, pines, willows, ash, and oaks, grow and come to perfection; and near the borders of the ice I gathered strawberries and wild cherries, and observed hazel-nuts, barberries, and mulberry-trees. The valley of Grindelwald is extremely fertile; it produces barley, rye, hay, hemp, and fruit-trees in great abundance, and feeds above two thousand large cattle.

I am, &c.

## LETTER 32.

*Valley and Glaciers of Lauterbruennen—Fall of the Staubbach.*

A TOLERABLE road leads from Grindelwald to this place, and we met a cart, which to us is become a remarkable object, not having seen any thing moving upon wheels since we quitted Lucern. The country is pleasingly diversified with hanging woods, immense rocks, deep precipices, and violent torrents. But I suppose you are by this time as much accustomed to rocks, precipices, and torrents, as the readers of Fingal to blue mists and hollow winds\*.

\* A nearer and more interesting, but more difficult passage, conducts over the Scheidec from Grindelwald to Lauterbruennen. In my second tour, I proposed traversing this passage, and had actually set off for that purpose; but a violent shower obliging me to change my resolution, I continued my journey along the same road as before.

It may be proper to apprise the traveller, that there are two Scheidecs, the one separating the vallies of Grindelwald and Meyringen, the other those of Grindelwald and Lauterbruennen.

The valley of Lauterbruennen is embosomed in the midst of the alps. The western boundary, from which the Staubbach falls, would, in any other country, be called an enormous mountain. it here appears only a trifling hill in comparison with the opposite chain, of which the highest point is the beautiful Jungfrau-horn, that stretches in a semicircular direction, and, towering above the adjacent peaks, rises to a stupendous height.

We are now lodged at the house of the clergyman of Lauterbruennen; a little village, or rather collection of cottages, sprinkled, like those of Grindelwald, about the valley and accessible parts of the hills. Near the house is the celebrated fall of the Staubbach, from which I am just returned. This torrent rolls perpendicularly from so considerable a height, and resolved itself into fine spray, the greater part falls clear of the overhanging mountain, during its whole descent; but the remainder dashes about half way against a projection of the rock, and flies off with great violence. The clergyman measured, a short time ago, its perpendicular height, and found it nine hundred and thirty feet. The sun shining in an opposite direction, a miniature rainbow was reflected towards the bottom of the fall; while I stood at some distance, it assumed a semicircular figure;

as



as I approached, the extremities gradually coincided, and formed a complete circle of the most brilliant colours. In order to have a still finer view, I ventured nearer and nearer, the circle at the same time becoming smaller and smaller; and as I stood quite under the fall, it suddenly disappeared. When I looked up to the torrent, it resembled a cloud of dust, and from this circumstance it takes its name; Staubbach signifying, in the German language, a spring of *dust*. I paid for my curiosity, by being extremely wet; but then I had the satisfaction, at the same time, of seeing a rainbow in miniature: no uncommon phænomenon, however, as it may be observed in any cascade, upon which the rays of the sun fall in a certain direction. In the present instance, however, it was some consolation to me, that the object happened to be peculiarly striking.

The next morning we rode to the extremity of the vale, in which there are some noble points of view, and ascended to the glaciers, stretching from the feet of the Breit-horn and Gross-horn. In this delightful valley many streams \* of the clearest water gush from the

\* From which circumstance it receives its name, *Lauterbruennen*, in German, signifying *many springs*.

earth like small rivers, and numberless torrents precipitate themselves from the mountains. I noticed two in particular, which fall from a greater height than even the Staubbach ; but as their descent is not so direct, they are less extraordinary.

After mounting above three hours, we reached a small hut, which in summer is inhabited by herdsmen, who make excellent cheese, and tend numerous herds of cows, goats, and swine. Here we feasted upon cold chamois, which our host had provided for us, and concluded our repast with a desert of delicious cream. From thence we ascended still further, with considerable difficulty arrived at the borders of the glaciers, and were entirely surrounded by rugged and almost impassable rocks. We wished to proceed ; but our host assuring us that we had only time to return before night, we sat down close to the ice, and contemplated, with rapture and astonishment, part of the great central chain of the alps ; rocks towering above rocks, and mountains rising above mountains, not more distinguished for their stupendous height, than for the endless variety and rudeness of their forms. One of the peaks, which is called the Gross-horn, is of a pyramidal shape, and capped with frozen snow ; another, the Breit-horn,



horn; is conical, and seems crowned with an enormous mass of transparent ice, from which the reflection of the sun-beams was inexpressibly beautiful. But the most elevated and most majestic of the whole group is the Jungfrau-horn, or Virgin's horn, which receives the name of *virgin*, because its summit is inaccessible.

The hollows between the mountains are filled with large vallies of ice, broken into a great variety of shapes, and several torrents bursting from the snow, and uniting in their course, form the Weifs-Lutchine, a river which rolls rapidly through the valley of Lauterbruennen, joins the Schwartz-Lutchine, which flows from Grindelwald, and swells the Aar. Many of the mountains are covered to a great height with verdure, on which the eye reposes with delight amid the horrors of such wintry scenes. We observed also, at considerable elevations, several small villages, the access to which must be almost as difficult as to the glaciers to which we ascended.

Notwithstanding the magnificence and variety of this scenery, and the uncommon phænomenon of ice and snow in the midst of summer, bordering on forests and cultivation; I must again repeat, that the ideas which we had previously conceived, from exaggerated accounts,



concerning the boundless extent and magnificent appearance of the glaciers, were not sufficiently answered. It is remarkable, that every object in Switzerland has more than gratified our expectations, except the glaciers, which must be considered as forming one of the most interesting phænomena in the whole country. This disappointment seems to have been occasioned by the turgid descriptions which we had heard and read of the glaciers of Grindelwald and Lauterbruennen; and we were led to suppose, that the glacier of the Furca was much inferior in magnitude to those of Grindelwald and Lauterbruennen; whereas, in fact, it was in all respects equal, if not superior \*.

September 1, 1785.

IN 1785, I was considerably more delighted and astonished with the vallies of Grindelwald and Lauterbruennen than in 1776; because my imagination was not in this, as in the former instance, exalted by exaggerated descriptions,

\* We perhaps were less struck with the glaciers of Grindelwald and Lauterbruennen, because we had previously viewed similar scenes in our passage through the most sublime regions of Switzerland; whereas these are the first grand objects in the route usually taken by travellers, through Bern, and consequently make a greater impression.

and

and led to expect more than could be reached, even by nature herself, however prodigal in these her sublimest works. But the vallies of ice still appear inconsiderable objects, when viewed at some distance, and compared with the surrounding mountains, whose summits and sides are clothed with vast tracts of ice and snow. On a nearer approach they become more interesting, particularly when broken into abrupt ridges, and immense chasms; and when their aggregate mass, and numerous branches, are observed from the surrounding heights. Still, however, the traveller may be disappointed, whose imagination has been previously filled with turgid descriptions, or who applies to the vallies of ice that sublimity and magnificence, which are principally due to the alps above and around them.

## LETTER 33.

*Lakes of Thun and Brientz—Passage of Mount Gemmi—Baths of Leuk.*

THE nearest route from Lauterbruennen to the Baths of Leuk leads across the mountains to Kandersteig. It is called *le chemin vert*, or the *green way*, because the rocks are, for the most part, covered with herbage. It is only practicable to foot-passengers; and I was informed by a Swiss gentleman who passed it, that, though steep and difficult, it is not dangerous. Its distance may be three leagues, and, to a person not wholly unaccustomed to alpine passages, would require about five or six hours. A *chasseur* would perform it in less than half the time. In my second expedition, in 1785, I had proposed crossing this way, but was obliged to decline it, as I could not procure a guide who was acquainted with the road.

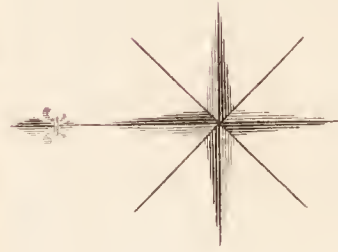
I pursued, therefore the usual route, which runs from the entrance of the valley of Lauterbruennen, through a fertile plain, between the  
lakes





PLAN OF  
the LAKES of  
THUN & BRIENZ

Engraved by B.Baker, High Street,  
LONDON.



Brunic Mountains

British Statute Miles.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8





lakes of Thun and Brientz. About two leagues from Lauterbruennen, I came to the Aar, near its exit from the lake of Brientz, and followed its course until it entered that of Thun. This lake is about four leagues long and one broad; and, if we may judge from the steepness of the mountains with which it is bounded, must be very deep; the borders are richly variegated, and present several fine points of view, greatly heightened by many rugged rocks rising boldly from the margin of the water. We coasted this lake, through a delightful country, to the small village of Leifingen; then ascended to *Æschi*, and looked down upon the lakes of Thun and Brientz. In all the maps of Switzerland, which have fallen under my observation, these two lakes are represented as if they extended almost in a straight line; whereas they are situated nearly at right angles to each other. You may judge of their true position, by the annexed engraving, communicated by the Rev. Mr. Wyttenbach of Bern.

Having descended from *Æschi*, we soon entered the rich valley of Frutigen, parallel to that of Lauterbruennen, and enjoyed, for a considerable way, a prospect of the glaciers we visited the day before. This valley ends at the small town of Frutigen; from thence commences  
that



that of Kander, watered by a river of the same name, and bounded by mount Kander. In all these vallies, the rudeness and height of the mountains, which almost enclose them, contrasted with the beauty and fruitfulness of the plains, always fertilized by some lively torrent, form a thousand picturesque scenes, ever changing, and impossible to be described: they are still further embellished by the number of ruined castles perched upon points seemingly inaccessible.

From the village of Kandersteg, delicate travellers, who do not choose to mount a rugged ascent, either on foot or on horseback, are carried in an arm-chair supported by means of poles upon men's shoulders. We proceeded, however, on horseback, having before rode up steeper and more difficult paths. After ascending about an hour and a half, we arrived at the summit of the Kander, where a wooden cross marks the entrance into the Vallais; then traversed a waving plain of pasture, in which we observed a few huts and several herds of cattle, and at length reached a single house on the Gemmi, where we procured some refreshment: here we saw nothing but immense rocks piled upon one another, with no appearance of vegetation; and the weather was exceedingly cold.

cold. Passing over a large drift of snow, we came to a lake called the Dauben See, about a league in circumference, supplied by a considerable torrent from a neighbouring glacier. This lake has no visible outlet, but doubtless finds a subterraneous passage into the *Vallais*.

The chain of mountains, which here separates the canton of Bern from the *Vallais*, is called the Gemmi; from the point of which, overlooking and almost over-hanging the *Vallais*, we had at once a most extensive prospect over that fertile country, and the rugged alps of Savoy. The mountain which we descended, is in many places almost perpendicular; and yet a horse-road has been hewed in the hard rock down this formidable descent. It was begun in 1736, and finished in 1741, at the joint expence of the *Vallais*, and the canton of Bern: an astonishing work! which proves that nothing is impracticable to human industry. More than a league has been blown up with gunpowder, and a way formed which seems dangerous to those, who are unused to mountainous countries, or whose heads are apt to turn giddy. It is about nine feet broad, and quite hangs over the precipice: in some parts, for a considerable space, it is a hollow way, open only at one side, the rock above projecting over it, of the same breadth.

breadth. The effect is peculiarly singular : for, as the road winds continually, the scene also continually changes ; so that one moment we commanded an extensive view, and the next were enclosed with barren rock.

The descent from the top to the plain is about two leagues : when you arrive at the bottom, and look up, you cannot observe the smallest traces of a road ; so that a stranger would hardly believe it possible, that a passage has been formed down the rock, until convinced by his own experience. About thirty years ago the troops of Bern descended this road for the purpose of assisting the canton of Uri against the inhabitants of the valley of Levino, who had revolted ; and, what is almost incredible, they descended with heavy artillery.

This place is famous for hot medicinal springs, and is much frequented by invalids during this season of the year : the patients either bathe or drink the waters. As far as I can judge from the accounts which I have received concerning their warmth, their analysis, the method of using them, and their efficacy in curing the gout, rheumatism, obstructions, and cutaneous disorders, they seem nearly to resemble those of Bath. There are several springs, of different warmth and of different qualities :  
according



according to the most accurate experiments made by the Rev. Mr. Wyttenbach, the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer, when plunged into the principal source, stood at 115; and at 120 in the spring which flows near the bridge over the Dala.

The accommodations for the company are very inconvenient: each person having for his own use a small apartment not more than a few feet square, in which there is just room for a bed, a table, and two chairs. The public dining-room is upon a larger scale, as is also an apartment where the company occasionally assemble. Formerly the accommodations were tolerably good; but unfortunately, in 1719, an *avalanche* from a neighbouring glacier overwhelmed the greater part of the houses and the baths, and destroyed a considerable number of inhabitants.

The company, consisting of persons from different quarters of Switzerland, are exceedingly affable and obliging: infomuch that several of them have invited us to their respective houses; and this invitation was made with that openness and unaffected frankness so peculiarly characteristic of the Swiss. We dined this morning at eleven; the bell for supper is now ringing, and  
it

It is scarce seven. These are primitive hours ; but we have travelling appetites ; and, provided we meet with refreshment, the hour and place are of little consequence.

You are now probably drinking tea in your withdrawing room at Bath, from whence you are enjoying that beautiful prospect I have so often admired. The situation of this spot is more romantic than that of Bath, and the waters perhaps not less efficacious ; yet this village contains only a few miserable houses, while Bath is one of the finest towns in Europe. I had a conversation to-day upon this topic, with a very ingenious and well-informed gentleman of the Vallais. I observed to him, that, considering the great credit and efficacy of these waters, I could not forbear wondering, that the chiefs of the republic had not considered the improvement of the accommodations, an object worthy of their attention ; for if they were rendered more convenient for the reception of invalids, it would undoubtedly be the means of drawing a great number of strangers, and consequently must be highly beneficial to the country. He assured me, it had more than once been in contemplation ; that some persons of great credit and authority opposed all improvements,  
upon

upon a principle similar to the policy of Lycurgus; conceiving that an influx of strangers would only serve to introduce luxury among the inhabitants, and insensibly destroy that simplicity of manners, for which the *Vallaisans* are so remarkably distinguished.

How far the ignorance of a people contributes to their true felicity? or how far simplicity of manners may be corrupted by *national* improvement? are questions which have been much agitated, and will never be decided, so long as it shall be held just reasoning to argue from the abuse against the use. But it will readily be allowed, that superstition is ever the companion of ignorance; and that a people who are both ignorant and superstitious, must necessarily be benefited by an intercourse with nations more improved and enlightened than themselves.

We walked to a spot not far from hence, where a communication is formed with the village Albenen. Where the mountain inclines towards a slope, a footpath has been cut; but in those parts where the rock is perpendicular, ladders are placed, and the peasants ascend and descend with heavy burdens upon their shoulders. We counted seven of these ladders.

I men-



I mention this circumstance, not as being an object so remarkable, perhaps, as is represented by some travellers, but as it will convey to you an idea of the extreme ruggedness and singularity of the country.

I am, &c.

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## LETTER 34.

*Republic of the Vallais — Cardinal Schinner —  
Town of Sion — Martigny — St. Maurice.*

Sion, August 19.

SION being nearly the point where the German language terminates, and the French begins, the natives in this part of the Vallais consequently speak both tongues.

We set out this morning at five, and came down a very steep valley to Leuk, a small town built upon an eminence near the Rhone, which is here very rapid; and, if we may judge by the breadth of the channel, often overflows its banks. We crossed at this place, and continued for some way through a forest of firs,

till we again passed the river to Siders: from thence we coasted its banks to Sion, the capital of the Vallais.

Another road leading from the baths of Leuk to Siders, which I traversed in 1785, though more steep and incommodious, is far more interesting to the traveller, who delights in picturesque views. It is called the *galleries*, is cut along the sides of an abrupt and rugged rock, in a zig-zag direction, and bounded by a wooden railing, which overhangs a dreadful abyss, so deep and obscure, that the river Dala, which rolls impetuously through it, is neither seen nor heard. The opposite chain of mountains is clothed with dark forests, enlivened with pastures, and interspersed with occasional villages, which are situated one above the other, to a considerable height, and seem scarcely accessible but to foot-passengers.

This tract of country, called the Vallais, stretches from east to west about a hundred miles, and contains 100,000 inhabitants, who all profess the Roman Catholic religion. It is divided into Upper and Lower Vallais: the former reaches from the Furca to the Morge, below Sion; and the latter from that river to St. Gingou, situated upon the lake of Geneva.

The Upper Vallais is sovereign of the Lower Vallais, and comprises seven independent *dixains* or commonwealths; namely, Sion, Goms, Brieg, Visp, Leuk, Raren, and Siders: of these Sion is aristocratical, and the others democratical. They are called *Dixains*, because the Upper Vallais being divided into seven, and the Lower into three districts, each division is a *dixain*, or *tenth* of the whole.

The bishop of Sion was formerly absolute sovereign over the greater part of the Vallais; but his authority is at present limited to a few particulars. He has the sole power of pardoning criminals, and signs the warrants for execution; the money is coined in his name, and with the arms of the republic. In his acts he styles himself bishop of Sion, prince of the German empire, and count and præfect of the Vallais: in days of high ceremony he dines in public, and is waited upon by the first noble of the Vallais who is hereditary treasurer. He nominates also, the bailifs or governors of the two bailliages of Martigny and Arden, and possesses considerable influence from his patronage of church preferment. Upon a vacancy in the see, the canons of the chapter of Sion present from their own body four candidates, one of whom is appointed



appointed bishop by the *Landsrath*, or general diet.

The seven *dixains* form, conjointly with the bishop, the republic of the Vallais, and all affairs are transacted in the diet, called *Landsrath*, which meets twice every year at Sion. This assembly consists of nine voices; the bishop; the *lands-hauptmann*, who is chosen or confirmed by the diet every two years; and the seven communities. The bishop presides, the *lands-hauptmann* collects the votes; and all resolutions are decided by the majority. Each *dixain*, although it has but one vote, sends as many deputies as it pleases; they generally consist of four; a judge, a banneret, a captain, and a lieutenant. The judge and the lieutenant are appointed every two years; the two others hold their offices for life.

In all civil causes of a certain importance, an appeal lies from the inferior courts of justice to the diet in the last resort. Thus, by the institution of this supreme council, the communities in this country are firmly united, and form in conjunction one body politic, or republic, for the general affairs of the nation. In other cases, each of the commonwealths is governed by its own particular laws and customs.

Both the Upper and Lower Vallais were formerly dependent upon the bishop of Sion ; but the inhabitants of the two districts united in order to limit his power ; and, having succeeded, quarrelled for superiority. A bloody war ensued ; which terminated, in 1475, by the total defeat of the Lower Vallaisans. Since that period, they have continued subject to the Upper Vallais, with the enjoyment, however, of some considerable privileges.

The republic of the Vallais is an ally of the thirteen cantons, and has formed a particular league with the seven Catholic cantons, for the defence of their religion.

The bishops of Sion had formerly a considerable influence over the political affairs of Switzerland ; and Matthew Schinner, the cardinal bishop, is famous in history for great abilities, daring spirit of intrigue, and restless ambition. He was born at Milbach, in the dixain of Goms ; and in 1500 was raised to this see. In consequence of his representations and influence, the Swiss troops gave a singular instance of infidelity to their public engagements, by breaking a subsidiary treaty which they had recently contracted with Francis the First, soon after his first invasion of the Milanese. The Swiss historians however record, with triumph, the patriotic conduct

conduct of two officers, who, remonstrating against this breach of faith, drew off eight thousand troops, and, returning to Switzerland, in some measure retrieved the honour of the nation. The remainder of the army, instigated by the eloquence of the cardinal, engaged Francis the First near Marignano, in one of the most furious battles fought during the bloody wars of Italy. Night alone put a stop to the engagement, without separating the combatants; both armies were blended upon the field of battle; and Francis slept upon the carriage of a cannon, at no great distance from a battalion of the enemy. At day-break the Swifs renewed the charge with their usual courage, and were received with equal bravery. At length the intrepidity of the king, and the desperate valour of the French, rose superior to the repeated attacks of the Swifs, who retreated to Milan, leaving Francis in possession of the field of battle: an advantage, however, which he gained by the loss of his bravest troops.

The cardinal, actuated by the most inveterate enmity to the French, occasioned also, by his intrigues, the loss of the Milanese to Francis. Lautrec, in the year 1521, commanded a body of 12,000 Swifs, who formed the principal strength of his army. On the other side, the



cardinal obtained, by his influence over his countrymen, a secret levy of the like number, to join the enemies of France: thus, for the first time, the Swifs were seen combating under opposite banners, and ready to commit hostilities against each other. Upon this occasion the cantons dispatched messengers, with peremptory orders for the Swifs in both armies to return to their country. The cardinal bribed the messengers to conceal these orders from the Swifs in the army of the confederates, and to deliver them only to those who were in the French service. They obeyed accordingly; and this desertion weakening the army of Lautrec, Milan and the principal towns surrendered to the confederates. Soon after this additional instance of his intrigues and influence, the cardinal ended his turbulent life in the conclave, which assembled on the death of Leo the Tenth, for the election of a new pope.

The inhabitants of this part of the Vallais are very much subject to *goiters*, or large excrescences in the neck, which often increase to a most enormous size; but what is more extraordinary, idiocy no less abounds. I saw many instances of both, as I passed through Sion; some idiots were basking in the sun with their tongues out, and their heads hanging down; exhibiting

exhibiting an affecting spectacle of intellectual imbecility. The causes which produce a frequency of these phænomena greatly excite my curiosity; but I shall defer my remarks until I shall have obtained farther information.

The weather in this enclosed vale is so exceedingly sultry, that although the evening is far advanced, I am quite oppressed. This languid heat is probably one of the causes which occasion the inconceivable indolence of the inhabitants: much, however, must at the same time be attributed to the richness of the soil, which precludes the necessity of labour by almost spontaneously producing the fruits of the earth. In fact, the people assist nature very little: we passed several vineyards, in which the vines were suffered to trail upon the ground; whereas, if the branches were properly supported, the owner would be well rewarded by the superior quantity and quality of the produce.

The uncleanness of the common people is disgusting beyond expression. I have just been holding a conversation upon this subject with my landlord: though himself a notorious example, he severely censured the dirtiness of his countrymen, and seemed to assign it as one cause of *goiters*. This assertion induced me to examine the person of my host with somewhat more

attention ; and I was rather disappointed to find, that he proved an exception to his own remark. Let me not, however, be understood as insinuating that the inhabitants in general are either goitrous, idiots, indolent, or dirty ; like that traveller who asserted, that all the women of a certain town were crooked, red-haired, and pitted with the small-pox, because his landlady happened to be so. Indeed, I look upon national reflections in general to proceed from the most illiberal turn of mind, and have always been cautious not to judge of the physical or moral character of any people from a partial and superficial view. But the prevalency in the present instance, of goiters and idiocy, and the general dirtiness and indolence of the common people are too notorious to escape the observation of the most careless traveller.

Sion is situated near the Rhone, at the foot of three insulated rocks, that rise immediately from the plain. The highest, called Tourbillon, supports the ruins of the old episcopal palace, still containing two or three untenanted apartments, in one of which are the portraits of the several bishops. On the second rock, denominated Valeria, are observed the remains of the old cathedral, and a few houses belonging to the canons. On Mayoria, the third rock, stands the  
episcopal



J. Smith del.



W. Smith sc.





episcopal palace, an antient edifice of stone, built in 1547. On seeing the apartments, I was greatly struck with their plainness, and could not avoid reflecting with pleasure on the simplicity of manners, which must necessarily prevail in this country; when the rooms inhabited by the sovereign, instead of bespeaking the magnificence of a court, are scarcely superior to the dwelling of a peasant. Two apartments principally engaged my attention. The first is that in which the diet assembles: at the upper end are two armed chairs for the bishop and the *lands-hauptmann*, and on each side a row of smaller seats for the deputies of the seven *dixains*. The other apartment is the hall, in which the bishop holds his court, like the feudal lords of antient times: at the further extremity is a raised seat, called a throne, surrounded by a wooden balustrade, and as an incitement to wisdom and impartiality, the figures of Justice, and Solomon's judgment, are coarsely painted upon the walls \*.

Sion

\* Soon after the capture of Bern, the attempts to introduce the new constitution created great dissatisfaction among the natives of the Upper Vallais. But the bishop of Sion, who was then in the power of the French, was under the necessity of affecting great pleasure at the overthrow



Sion is an antient town, and was formerly the capital of the *Seduni*, who inhabited this part of the

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overthrow of his sovereignty. The *Moniteur* has preserved his letter, on this occasion, to the French resident Mangourit, and the answer.

“ Citizen Resident, I have learnt with extreme satisfaction, that the plan of a constitution for the republic of the Vallais, guarantees, under your auspices, to my diocese the preservation of the catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion in all its purity. I want words to testify the most lively gratitude; and I doubt not but our religion will be a restraint on my flock, and inspire it with an implacable hatred of licentiousness and anarchy.

“ Take, I beseech you, citizen, under your powerful protection the church of Sion and all the clergy, of whom the greater part, particularly our chapter, in seconding my intentions, and executing my orders, have distinguished themselves by a conduct calculated to inspire the people with confidence in their worthy representatives, and to re-animate the love of their country.

(Signed) “ ANTONY, bishop of Sion.”

#### ANSWER OF MANGOURIT.

“ Athanasius closed the doors of his church against the crimes of Theodosius, you have opened yours to civic virtues, by facilitating the acceptance of the constitution of the Vallais.

“ At your voice the canons of Sion repaired to the seven upper dixains, to prevent the people from being misled by malevolence.

“ Glory

the country in the time of Julius Cæsar. A few remaining inscriptions still prove its antiquity; and, among others, so obliterated that I was not able to decypher them, I observed one which was more legible: it is in honour of the emperor Augustus, during his eleventh consulship. In this inscription the town is called *Civitas Sedunorum*.

At Sion we parted with our horses and guides, who had accompanied us from Altdorf; and procured a piece of luxury, to which we had been for some time unaccustomed; I mean a coach. But, notwithstanding the concentrated heat of the climate, and the great fultriness of the air, I prefer riding or walking; as by that means I enjoy a more unobstructed view of the country: indeed the scenes are so beautiful, and so perpetually changing, that the attention is incessantly engaged by a variety of new objects.

“Glory be to your humanity!

“Schinner, one of your predecessors, occasioned the effusion of much blood; you, citizen bishop, you love to spare bloodshed.

“An article of the constitution guarantees to your flock the maintenance of their religious opinions.

“Your wise conduct secures to you for ever the homage of the friends of liberty, of wisdom, and of peace.” *Moniteur, 15th Germinal.*

On

On entering the Lower Vallais, I perceived as much uncleanness, but a greater appearance of industry ; and I am informed that the natives are not altogether so indolent as the inhabitants of Sion and its environs.

This imputation of indolence will not hold good with respect to all the inhabitants of the Upper Vallais : for in the eastern part of that district, which we entered after having crossed the Furca, the soil, though far inferior, was much better cultivated, and the people seemed industrious. Some physical reasons may be assigned for this difference ; for *there* the weather is not so sultry, the water is not unwholesome, the air remarkably salutary, and we did not observe any of those goitrous persons or idiots, common in the midland parts.

We stopped at the village of Martigny, which, according to antiquaries, was the antient *Octodurum*. It is said, that near this place may be traced the site of Sergius Galba's camp, one of Julius Cæsar's lieutenants, who was sent to subdue the *Veragri*, the *Nantuates*, and the *Seduni* ; the antient inhabitants of these districts. It seems evident indeed from Cæsar's description, in the third book of his Commentaries, that *Octodurum* could not be far from the present situation of Martigny, which stands in a small  
plain,



plain, encircled by high mountains, and divided by the Dranse, that falls into the Rhone. I cannot, however, ascertain from my own observation, whether any traces of a Roman encampment still remain; nor could I gain the least information from the inhabitants; so that the conjecture concerning the situation of *Octodurum* rests only upon the faith of antiquaries, and on the general position of the country.

Martigny is a place much frequented by travellers: it leads to the valley of Chamouny, to St. Maurice and the lake of Geneva, and is the passage of the merchandize, which is conveyed over the Great St. Bernard into Italy. Near Martigny we passed under the majestic ruins of La Bathia, an old episcopal castle, crowning the summit of a craggy rock, and impending over the impetuous Dranse. The road from hence to St. Maurice runs under a chain of rocks, the Rhone flowing at a small distance through the middle of a fertile vale. Having crossed the Trient, a turbid torrent which issues from a narrow and obscure glen, remarkable for its rugged and romantic scenery, we arrived at the Pisse-Vache, a cataract much noticed by travellers. The characteristic beauty of this fall is, that it seems to burst from a cleft in the middle of the rock, through hanging shrubs,

shrubs, and forms a perpendicular column about two hundred feet in height. The body of water being very ample, and the elevation not so considerable as to reduce it entirely into spray, render the effect very striking. I enjoyed also the additional pleasure of seeing the sun rise opposite to this water-fall. The regular expansion of the rays enlightening the different parts of the column of water; and the gradual descent of the rainbow formed by the spray, were inexpressibly beautiful. These torrents are my delight; but perhaps they recur too often in my letters to continue to be yours. Formerly travellers passed close to the Pisse-Vache; but a few years ago part of the rock falling down totally obstructed the road, which now runs through the middle of the valley.

At the extremity of the Lower Vallais, the two chains of mountains that bound this country, approach towards the Rhone, which nearly fills the interval between. In this spot is situated the town of St. Maurice, built almost totally upon the rock, at the foot of some steep mountains, and at a small distance from the river. The antient appellation was *Agaunum*: that of St. Maurice is derived from an abbey, erected in the beginning of the sixth century, by Sigismond king of Burgundy, in honour of  
a saint,

a saint, who is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in this place; he was the leader of the famous Theban legion, said to have been massacred by order of the emperor Maximin, for not renouncing Christianity. This history has given rise to much controversy: while some authors have treated it as a mere forgery, others have contended for its authenticity, with as much zeal, as if the truth of Christianity depended upon the decision. Without entering into the merits of the question, I cannot but remark, that the cause of Christianity has suffered more from weak and imprudent defenders, than from the sharpest attacks of its most inveterate adversaries. Indeed, the question concerning the number and sufferings of the martyrs has occasioned much idle disputation: should we reduce the popular accounts of both within the bounds of probability, there will still remain sufficient evidence of the wonderful constancy and calm resolution of those primitive victims; and whether a hundred thousand, or only fifty, suffered, Christianity will equally stand upon the same immovable foundation. Nor is the inquiry more material concerning the motives that actuated its powerful and cruel adversaries. It matters not whether Decius ordered the Christians to be massacred, because they had been favoured



by his predecessor Philip, or from his attachment to the Pagan rites; whether Maximin persecuted them from interested motives; Diocletian as introducing innovations in his government; or whether Constantine protected them from conviction or policy. For the truth of Christianity is in no respect affected either by the imprudence of its early professors (if with any they were justly chargeable) or the political reasons that influenced the conduct of those emperors.

A few Roman inscriptions, chiefly sepulchral, and two defaced columns are the only uncontroverted remains of the antiquity of St. Maurice. It is principally distinguished as being the chief entrance from the canton of Bern into the Vallais. This entrance is formed by a narrow pass, so strongly fortified by nature, that a handful of men might defend it against a considerable army. The stone bridge over the Rhone is much admired for its bold projection: it is of a single arch, and the span is a hundred and thirty feet. Half of this bridge belongs to the Vallais, and the remainder to the canton of Bern \*.

I am, &c.

\* At an early period of the French revolution, the disaffected party of the Lower Vallais appealed to France to emancipate their country from their subjection to the  
Upper

## LETTER 35.

*Of the Vallais—Goiters and Idiots.*

Trient, August 22.

**I** AM now writing from the village of Trient, on my way to Mont Blanc and the alps of Savoy. From the mountain of the Furca, its eastern boundary, two vast ranges of alps enclose the Vallais: the southern chain separates it from the Milanese, Piedmont, and part of Savoy; the northern from the canton of Bern. These two chains, in their various windings,

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Upper Vallais, but the French not having matured their scheme of fraternization, their petition was rejected.

In February 1798, however, the people of the Lower Vallais were enfranchised, and admitted to an equality of rights by the Upper Vallais; but after the conquest of Bern, and the revolution of the greater part of Switzerland, the inhabitants of the Upper Vallais rejected the new constitution, took up arms, and defended themselves with great spirit. After several bloody defeats, and the capture of the castle of Sion, which was stormed by the French, the natives submitted, and both districts were moulded into one department called the Vallais, of which the capital is Sion.

form several small valleys, watered by numerous torrents that rush into the Rhone, as it traverses the whole district from the Furca to St. Maurice. A country thus entirely enclosed within high alps, and consisting of plains, elevated valleys, and lofty mountains, must exhibit a great variety of situations, climates, and productions. Accordingly, the Vallais presents to the curious traveller a quick succession of prospects, as beautiful as diversified. Vineyards, rich pastures covered with cattle, corn, flax, fruit-trees, and forests, occasionally bordered by naked rocks crowned with everlasting snow.

The productions of the Vallais vary according to the great diversity of climates by which this country is distinguished. It supplies more than sufficient wine and corn for interior consumption, and exports a considerable quantity of both; the soil in the midland and lower districts being exceedingly rich and fertile. In the plain, where the heat is collected and confined between the mountains, the harvest is usually finished in July; whereas, in the more elevated parts, barley is the only grain that can be cultivated with any success, and the crop is seldom cut before November. About Sion, the fig, the melon, and all the other fruits of Italy, come to perfection; in consequence of this singular



singular variety of climates, I tasted in the same day, strawberries, cherries, plums, pears, and grapes; each the *natural* growth of the country.

There are no manufactures of any consequence; and indeed the general ignorance of the people is no less remarkable than their indolence; so that they may be considered, in regard to knowledge and improvements, as some centuries behind the Swiss, who are an enlightened nation. The peasants seldom endeavour to meliorate those lands where the soil is originally bad, or to draw the most advantage from those which are uncommonly fertile; having few wants, and being satisfied with the spontaneous gifts of nature, they enjoy her blessings without much considering in what manner to improve them.

Before I take leave of the Vallais, I shall communicate the result of my inquiries concerning the causes which contribute to render goitrous persons and idiots common in these parts; premising, at the same time, that I must stand greatly in need of your candour, when I venture to treat a subject so extremely complicated, and on which so many different opinions have been advanced by naturalists and physicians.

The notion that snow-water occasions goiters, is totally void of foundation ; for on that supposition, why are they common in the midland and lower parts, and extremely rare in the higher regions of Switzerland? particularly what reason can be assigned, why the natives of those places that lie most contiguous to the glaciers, and who drink no other water than what descends immediately from those immense reservoirs of ice and snow, are not subject to this malady? Why are the inhabitants of those countries in which there is no snow, afflicted with it? For these guttural tumours are to be found in the environs of Naples, in the island of Sumatra, and at Patna and Purnea, in the East Indies, where snow is unknown.

But, instead of repeating the various opinions on this subject, I shall at present confine myself to the result of my own observations and inquiries.

The springs of this district are impregnated with a calcareous matter, called in Switzerland *tuf*\*, nearly similar to the incrustations of Mat-

\* The Porus of the older authors.

The Tophus glareoso, argillaceus Polymorphus, of Linnæus, 186. 1.

The Tophus Polymorphus of Wallerius, Syst. vol. ii. p. 394.

The Tophi of Kirwan, p. 25, called *Duckstein* by the Germans.

lock in Derbyshire, so completely dissolved as not to affect the transparency of the water. Will it be deemed improbable, that the impalpable particles of this substance should thus introduce themselves, by means of the blood, into the glands of the throat, and produce goiters \*? I ground this opinion on the following observations and facts :

\* Dr. Baillie, physician to St. George's Hospital, has lately given a beautiful plate illustrative of the diseased appearances of the Thyroid Gland, which is the seat of the Bronchocele, or Goiter. "When a section is made," he says, "of the thyroid gland affected with this disease, it is found to contain a number of cells filled with a transparent viscid fluid. This fluid becomes solid, like jelly, when the gland has been preserved for some time in spirits." He notices too, that a few of the cells of one gland, which he divided, were filled with a gritty, hard, whitish matter.

It appears also that the structure of the thyroid gland is favourable to the deposition and detention of stony particles carried into it by the blood; for it is supplied by four arteries, uncommonly large in proportion to the size of the gland, and has no excretory duct, through which any substance once deposited can pass. Hence a very inconsiderable deposition of tuf might be sufficient to produce by irritation such an abundant secretion of viscid fluid as to distend the cells, and by this enlargement of the gland, gradually to occasion goiters. *Baillie's Morbid Anatomy*, p. 311. *Second Fasciculus*, plate 1.



To speak in general: during my travels through Europe, I never failed to observe that *tuf*, or this calcareous deposition, abounds in all those districts wherein goiters are common. I noticed goitrous persons and much *tuf* in Derbyshire, in various parts of the Vallais, in the Valteline, at Lucern, Friburgh, and Bern, near Aigle and Bex, in several places of the Pays de Vaud, near Dresden, in the valleys of Savoy and Piedmont, near Turin and Milan.

To descend to particular instances. The inhabitants of Friburgh, Bern, and Lucern, are much subject to guttural excrescences. With respect to Friburgh, I observed that one of the principal springs which supplies the town with water, issues from a neighbouring stone-quarry, and has formed large depositions of *tuf* on the rock from which it bubbles. The pipes also which convey water to the public fountains at Bern, are charged with the same calcareous sediment; and a gentleman, on whose veracity I can depend, assured me, that he is subject to a small swelling in the throat, which usually increases in winter, when he is chiefly resident at Bern, and diminishes in summer, on his removal to other places, where the waters are not loaded with *tuf*.

I was, moreover, informed by General Pfiffer, that at Lucern all the waters, excepting one spring, are impregnated with *tuf*, and that the natives, who dwell near that spring, are much less subject to goiters than the other inhabitants; that the same difference is observed among the members of the same family, between those who drink no water but what is drawn from that spring, and the others who do not use that precaution. The general shewed me also the tin vessel, in which water was every morning boiled for his use, and which was so speedily and thickly incrustated as to render it necessary to have it cleansed twice a-week. The water which yields this deposition is as transparent as chrystal\*.

I also visited many places contiguous to those districts wherein goiters and *tuf* are frequent, and having precisely the same situation and

\* Although it appears that wherever there are goiters there is *tuf*-stone; yet the reverse is by no means true, that wherever the waters deposit *tuf*, there are *always* goiters: for perhaps the natives do not drink of the springs which are loaded with *tuf*, or that substance is not sufficiently dissolved in the waters; absolute solution being, perhaps, necessary to produce these swellings.

climate, yet I observed no goiters among the inhabitants, nor any appearance of *tuf*.

But the strongest proof in favour of this opinion is derived from positive fact. A surgeon, whom I met at the Baths of Leuk, informed me, that he had not unfrequently extracted concretions of *tuf-stone* from several goiters; and that from one in particular, which suppurated, he had taken several flat pieces, each about half an inch long; the same substance, he added, is found in the stomachs of cows, and in the goitrous tumours to which even the dogs of the country are subject. He likewise assured me, that in the course of an extensive practice, he had diminished and cured the goiters of many young persons by emollient liquors and external applications; that his principal method to prevent them in future consisted in removing the patients from the places where the springs are impregnated with *tuf*, and, if that could not be contrived, by forbidding the use of water which was not purified. He confirmed the report that infants are occasionally born with guttural swellings, particularly those whose parents are goitrous, and remarked that one of his own children had at its birth a goiter as large as an egg, although  
neither



neither he nor his wife, who were both foreigners\*, were afflicted with that malady. He had dissipated it by external remedies; and since that period, had invariably prohibited his family from tasting the spring waters, unless they were distilled, or mixed with wine or vinegar; by which means he preserved them from those tumours, that were extremely common among the natives of the town which he inhabited.

Although it is by no means my intention to trouble you with the various opinions which have been advanced on this subject; yet it would be unjust to withhold that of M. de Saussure, whose accurate researches and profound investigation on philosophical subjects deserve to be weighed with the greatest attention. That able naturalist, in a recent publication †, attributes the production of goiters not to the waters, but principally to the concentrated heat of the climate, and stagnation of the air. He informs us, that in all his travels through the Alpine countries, he never observed goiters in any places, which are

\* In the former instance, goiters may, though perhaps erroneously, be esteemed hereditary; but in the latter, where the parents are both foreigners and not goitrous, can scarcely be derived from any other cause than the aliment of the mother.

† See *Voyages dans les Alpes*, ch. 48. vol. ii. p. 480.  
elevated

elevated more than 500 or 600 toises\* above the level of the sea: he noticed them in those vallies where the heat is concentrated, and the air stagnates, and that they usually cease wherever the valley terminates, and the country expands into a large plain. With great deference, however, to his opinion, may I be permitted to observe, that the conclusion does not absolutely follow from these premises? For it may be remarked, that in places elevated more than 500 or 600 toises above the level of the sea, the springs are too near their sources, to have dissolved a sufficient quantity of calcareous matter, or so minutely as may be requisite for the generation of goiters; that when the valley expands into a plain, the waters may deposit their sediment by mixing with the rivers and lakes, or by filtrating through the earth and gravel. But although the two causes mentioned by Saussure do not solely produce, they may *assist* in producing guttural excrescences, by relaxing the fibres, and disposing the glands of the throat to admit more easily the introduction of the impalpable particles in the water. For it is observable, that women and children, whose frames are more relaxed than those of men,

\* 3200 and 3840 English feet.

are more liable to be afflicted with these swellings; that the natives of those districts most remarkable for the size and number of goiters, are extremely wan and livid, much subject to intermitting fevers, and other disorders judged to proceed from relaxation. Although the concentrated heat, and stagnation of the air, may be allowed to have considerable influence on the human body, yet they do not seem sufficient for the effect in question, without the intervention of some other cause: this cause *seems* to be the water, should the facts already stated prove consonant to truth and experience.

It may be necessary, however, to obviate an objection, that goiters must rather originate from climate and situation; because foreigners, established in the country, are *never* afflicted with those tumours, while their children are no less subject to them than the natives. But is it uncontrovertible, that *no* foreigner has ever been afflicted with this malady? The question, I should presume, can scarcely be replied to in the affirmative. And all that can be established, with any degree of certainty is, that foreigners are *less* subject to these swellings than their children, or the natives. In this respect the answer is evident. Persons who usually settle in  
foreign



foreign countries are adults; and adults are doubtless much less liable than children to an endemial malady, whose operation is gradual, and which requires much time, before its effects are visible. It is remarked, that, among the natives themselves, those persons, who have escaped this disorder during their infancy, are seldom attacked by it to any considerable degree at a more advanced age.

In reasoning upon this, as well as on similar subjects, where a cause is sought for, capable of producing a certain effect, it is necessary to establish a primary and general cause, which *always* and *necessarily* exists, wherever that effect is produced, and to exclude those circumstances which do not *always* and *necessarily* exist, wherever that effect is produced. Thus, in the present instance: If snow-water occasions goiters, wherever there are goiters, there *must* be snow-water, which is contrary to fact and experience. If the concentrated heat of the climate, and stagnation of the air, are *necessary* to the formation of goiters, those excrescences could never be formed where these causes are wanting, which is not confirmed by fact and experience. If waters, impregnated with *tuf*, or with certain calcareous substances, produce goiters; wherever there are goiters, the natives must drink waters so impregnated

pregnated, and this *seems* agreeable to fact and experience \*.

The same causes, which generate goiters, *probably* operate in the case of idiots; for wherever goiters prevail to a considerable degree, idiots invariably abound: such is the nice and inexplicable connection between our bodies and our minds, that the one ever sympathises with the other; and it is by no means an ill-grounded conjecture, that the same causes which affect the body should also affect the mind, or, in other words, that the waters, which create obstructions and goiters, should also occasion mental imbecility †.

\* The learned Mr. Whitaker, in his interesting account of the passage of Hannibal over the Alps, vol. i. p. 194, agrees with me in imputing the goiters to the waters, but to the waters impregnated with *metallic* particles, and he supports his opinion by the authority of Simler: but surely if so, the metallic particles would have been constantly found in the waters, and *occasionally* in the glandular swellings, which is not the fact.

† It has been suggested to me, by a very intelligent physician, that perhaps the impalpable particles of stone may penetrate by means of the blood into the glands of the brain, and form concretions which may affect that organ. It is a well-known fact, that earthy matter is frequently found in the pituitary gland.

Although

Although these idiots are frequently the children of goitrous parents, and have usually those swellings themselves ; yet they are sometimes the offspring even of healthy parents, whose other children are properly organized, and are themselves free from guttural excrescences. I observed several children, scarcely ten years of age, with very large goiters. These tumours, when they increase to a considerable magnitude, check respiration, and render those who are afflicted with them exceedingly indolent and languid. Some persons have, in opposition to the opinion which I have ventured to advance, supposed, that the small glandular swellings, which are common in many other parts, and the large excrescences, are more particularly observed in the Vallais, in the valley of Aost, and in some other places, do not proceed from the same cause, and are not the same disorder. But sufficient reasons have not been assigned for this opinion. During my expedition through the Vallais and other parts of Switzerland, I noticed some of all proportions, from the size of a walnut to almost the bigness of a peck loaf. As the same gradation may be also observed in the species of idiots ; by a similar mode of argument, those who possess some faint dawnings of  
reason



reason might be discriminated from others' who are totally deaf and dumb, and give no proof of existence but the mere animal sensations. Whereas it is probable, that in both instances, the greater or lesser derangement of the body or mind does not indicate a different complaint, but only different degrees of the same complaint.

It is to be presumed, that a people accustomed to these excrescences will not be shocked at their deformity ; but I do not find, as some writers assert, that they consider them as beauties. To judge from the accounts of many travellers, it might be supposed, that the natives, without exception, were either idiots or goitrous ; whereas, in fact, the Vallaisans, in general, are a robust race ; and all that with truth can be affirmed, is, that goitrous persons, and idiots, are more abundant in some districts of the Vallais, than perhaps in any other part of the globe\*.

It

\* I cannot withhold from the reader a curious passage on goitrous persons and idiots, from an interesting work published since my letters, which tends to confirm my remarks on this subject.

“ Goiters and idiots are very common in that part of Tartary which borders upon the Chinese Wall. Both sexes

It has been asserted also, that the people very much respect these idiots, and even consider them *as blessings from Heaven*; which is strongly contradicted by others. Upon my questioning some gentlemen of this country, at the baths of Leuk, they treated the notion as absurd and false; but

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sexes are subject to these swellings, but females more than males; the latter removing oftener from the spots where the causes exist, whatever they may be that occasion them.

“ These preternatural tumours did not appear to be attended with any other symptoms affecting the general health, or corporal functions of those in whom they were observed. But the minds of many of them were much weakened, and perhaps of all in a less degree. Some were reduced to a state of absolute idiocy. The spectacle of such objects, which fails not to convey a serious and even melancholy impression to persons who view them for the first time, produces no such effect upon those among whom they are bred. The objects themselves are, in their general habits, cheerful, and lead a mere animal life, as contradistinguished from that in which any thought or reflection is concerned. As they act alone from instinct, or the mere impulse of the senses, so their actions, however injurious they may happen to prove to others, are free from intentional malice, and occasion no resentment. Their persons are considered in some degree as sacred; and they are maintained by their families with peculiar care.”

*Account of the Embassy to China, vol. ii. p. 202.*

whether

whether they delivered their real sentiments, or were unwilling to confirm what might lower their countrymen in the opinion of a stranger, will admit perhaps of some doubt. For having, since that time, repeatedly inquired among the lower ranks, I am convinced, that the common people esteem them blessings. They call them "*Souls of God, without sin :*" and many parents prefer these idiot-children to those whose understandings are perfect ; because, as they are incapable of intentional criminality, they consider them as certain of happiness in a future state. Nor is this opinion entirely without its good effect ; as it disposes the parents to pay greater attention to such helpless beings. These idiots are suffered to marry, as well among themselves as with others.

I am, &c.



EXTRACT from SAXO GRAMMATICUS,  
referred to, p. 293.

**N**EC silentio implicandum, quod sequitur. Toko quidam aliquamdiu regis (i. e. Haraldī Blaatand) stipendia meritis officiis quibus commilitones superabat complures virtutum suarum hostes effecerat. Hic forte sermone interconvivas temulentius habito tam copioso se sagittandi usu callere jactitabat, ut pomum quantumcunque exiguum baculo e distantia superpositum, primâ spiculi directione feriret. Quæ vox primum obtrectantium auribus excepta regis etiam auditum attigit. Sed mox principis improbitas patris fiduciam ad filii periculum transtulit, dulcissimum vitæ ejus pignus baculi loco statui imperans. Cui nisi promissionis auctor primo sagittæ conatu pomum impositum excussisset, proprio capite inanis jactantiæ pœnas lueret. Urgebat imperium regis militem majora promissis edere, alienæ obtrectationis insidiis parum sobriæ vocis jactum carpentibus, &c.—

Exhibitum Toko adolescentem attentius monuit, ut æquis auribus capiteque indeflexo quam patientissime strepitum jaculi venientis exciperet, ne levi corporis motu efficacissimæ artis experientiam frustraretur. Præterea demendæ formidinis consilium circumspiciens, vultum ejus, ne viso telo terretur, avertit. Tribus deinde sagittis pharetrâ expositis prima quam nervo inseruit proposito obstaculo incidit.—

Interrogatus autem a rege Toko cur plura pharetræ spicula detraxisset, cum fortunam arcus semel duntaxat experimento prosequi debuisset. “ Ut in te,” inquit, “ primi errorem reliquorum acumine vindicarem, ne mea  
“ forte innocentia pœnam tui impunitatem experiretur  
“ violentia. Quo tam libero dicto et sibi fortitudinis  
“ titulum deberi docuit, et regis imperium pœna dignum  
“ ostendit.”

Lib. x. p. 286. edit. Læipſic. 1771.

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